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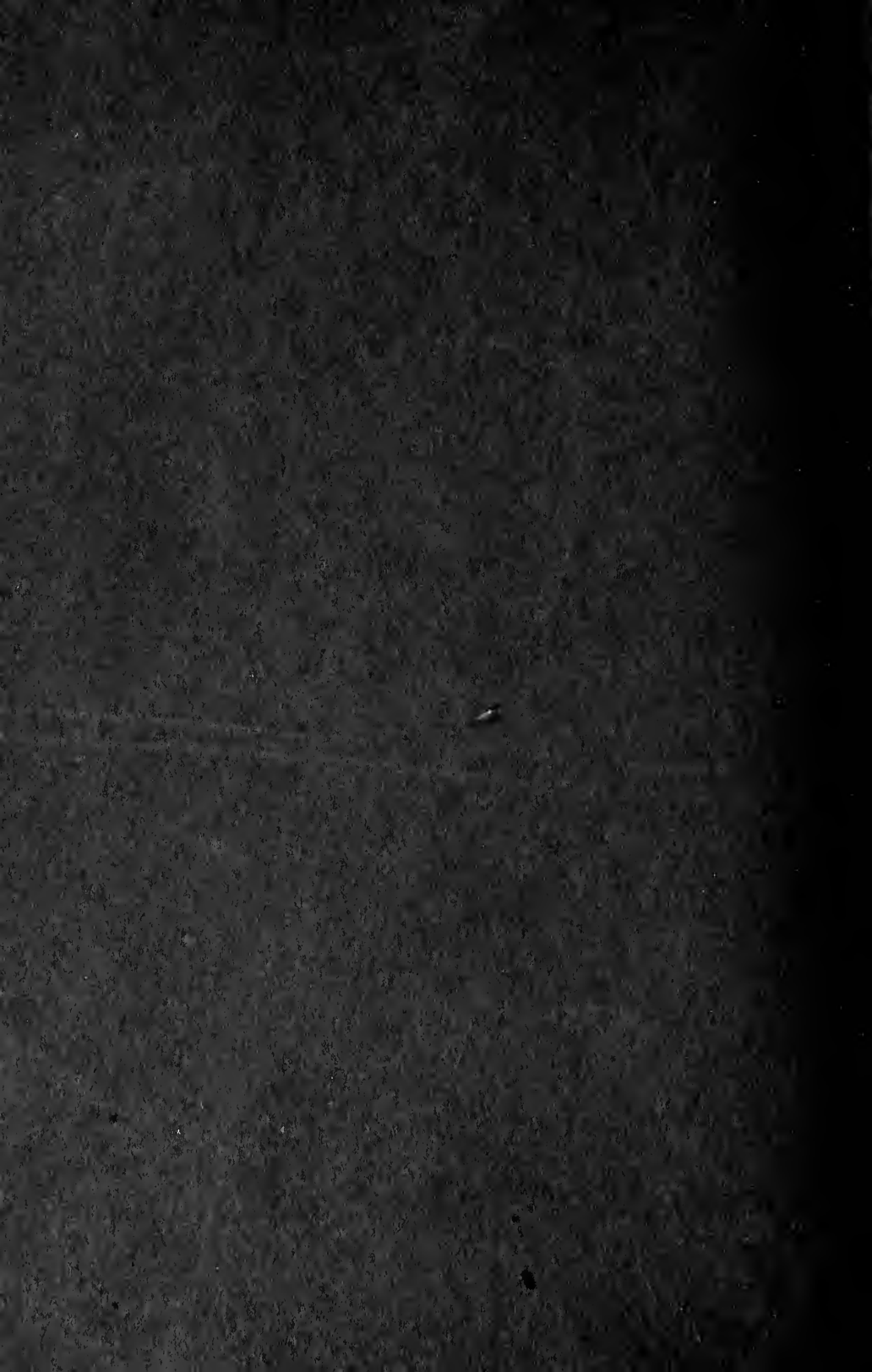
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PARAGRAPHS OF
PEDESTRIAN



E. N. TIERNACE







Paragraphs of a Pedestrian

as a whole
by
N. Tjernagel



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Paragraphs of a Pedestrian

by N. Tjernagel



I took this trip in memory of my grandfather. During his many visits among his grandchildren, he had filled our childish minds with wonderful tales from his beloved Valders, the place of his birth, which he had left in the exuberance of youthful spirits seventy-five years ago. What I remember most vividly was the story he told of once being overtaken by a vagabond in the mountain wilds, who, upon showing his true colors, grandfather in turn, showed a big bottle, which he let descend with a whack upon the head of the outlaw and then ran for dear life the rest of the day, never looking behind him at all. How the miscreant ever took it, and of how quickly he recovered from the shock, grandpa, for one, never learned. He was then on his way to the west coast.

Grandfather became a fisherman, a stonemason, and finally emerged as an emigrant on board a sailship for America, where he, together with his wife and daughter, my mother, spent eight unpleasant weeks. His grandchild didn't spend as many days, covering the same distance, coming comfortably in their wake aboard the Mauretania, a few months ago.

Grandfather tried Illinois for a few years, but he thought he could do better in Iowa, so he hitched up his

oxen and struck out for the west, locating in a structure of logs, among the Indians and rattlesnakes on the river lands of the placid, smooth flowing Des Moines. During winter he sought exercise in the forests, wood chopping furnishing a vent to his bounding energies and in summer, his plow, scythe, and hoe, powerfully and skilfully wrought, wrung submission from the virgin soil. They lived on cornbread, potatoes, beans, pork, and molasses, and he at least, was hugely satisfied. It was here that I first met him, my parents having settled farther east, near the Skunk river. When he caught sight of me, he threw out his arms threateningly, promising to break every bone in my body, but the reassuring twinkle lurking in the corner of his eye, belied his words. He promised dire things to us youngsters during our visits, but nothing ever happened, and he always had to let go of some tears, which he never wiped away, when we left for home. We missed him, oh so sorely, when his story telling ceased and Death called his spirit Hence, into the blissful Beyond, whither he had so long aspired to come. His body now rests on a beautiful knoll near the Des Moines river, far, far away, from his beloved Follingio, the home of his birth.

Can any one wonder at me, coming to Valders this summer in the wake of the great tourist stream which annually seeks this wonderfully beautiful section, that I would search all the hills about, and turn either upside down if necessary, to be able to locate this particular spot, this Follingio.

My first question after arriving at Fagerness, the end station of a funny little railway, over which two trains go tripping over the mountains from Christiania, daily, was directed at the proprietress of Fagerlund hotel as to the whereabouts of the place I was seeking. "Follingio?

Why, that is only half an hour's walk up the road from here." When she suggested that it was rather too late that day to make the visit, I failed to appreciate the advice. How preposterous to imagine that one could delay such a quest for as much as one second! I flung my satchels at the attendant and started out eagerly on foot, brimful of expectations. I scanned every nook and cliff and boulder, as I pressed on, hailing them as friends, knowing full well that grandfather had often lingered among them, a joyous youth, in the long, long ago. When I came to the venerable looking Strand church, I decided that he had been baptized there. Here I collided with a picturesque figure in the person of the native born school-master, Mr. John Strand, who wore old fashioned knee-breeches, trim vest, and who told me to look where he pointed, which I did and—beheld Follinglo nestling ever so snugly on the other side of the fjord.

Precipitous hills, picturesquely clad with spruce and fir, overhung the narrow stretch of soil, grudgingly spared between sea and mountain, for the tiny Follinglo fields. Though reminiscent of straitened lives and circumstances, the scene gave inspiration, possessing, as it did, many attributes of peculiar loveliness and charm.

Mr. Ole Jorstad, retired farmer and savings bank director, a one-time playmate of a prominent Norse-American musician and mutual friend, rowed me over in his "ship," as he called his tiny chip of a boat. He talked about olden days and sang several folk songs as he rowed, happy that he could be of service, to a friend of a friend of his youth. We rowed the mile but slowly, noting the different landmarks as they drew in sight; I busy to question, he busy to explain. Once on land we took a short path to gain time, but got lost among the pines, which, gave me occasion to tease Ole for not being acquainted at

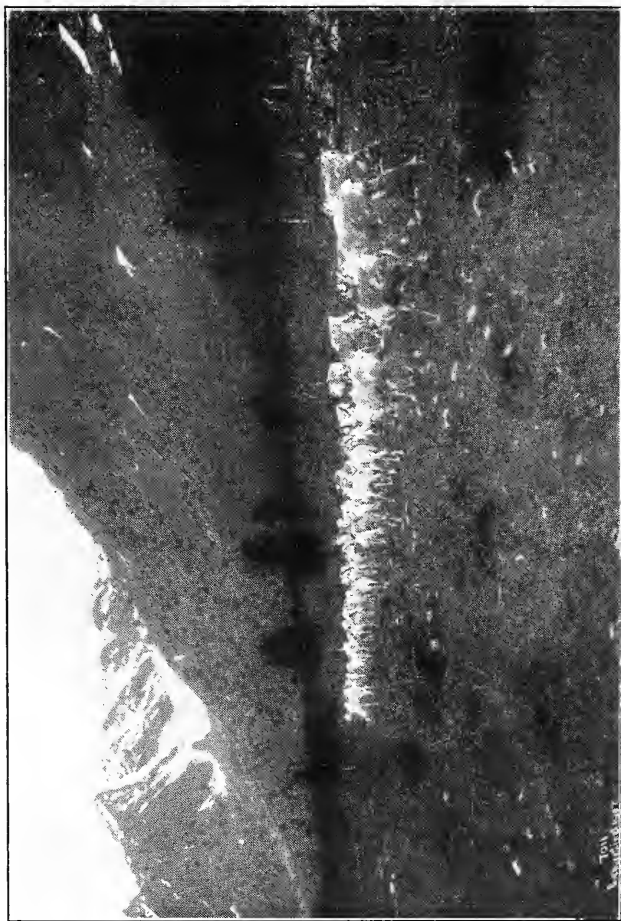
home. He merely puffed a little stronger at his pipe, stroked his gray beard, and winked at me to come on. We tumbled into the bed of a dry mountain brooklet, and rambling on, bounced out upon Follingto, quite unexpectedly. Ole rubbed his eyes and looked around questioningly, as if he wasn't sure whether he had actually allowed himself to get lost, back there, or not.

My grandfather was born on cotter's place on Follingto "gaard." When I drew my feet over the threshold of the aged hut standing trusty guard over its sacred memories, I experienced one of those rare moments which so seldom come to any of us; becoming possessed of feelings, for which I have neither words, or other means, to give expression. I carved my name above the bedroom door. The present occupant and his family looked on with awe.

Though there is no gaudiness whatever about the little farm, the inviting surroundings make up for it in varied attractiveness. Nor does the sorry looking house and barnyard add any prestige. No wonder grandfather felt rather hemmed in, for, being a strong active youth, the work did not suit; also, having attained to a goodly height, he could scarcely stand upright in the little house; and every time he passed in and out he was obliged to bend low, for the doors were only five feet and hardly that. There was ancient moss between the logs, placed there, nobody knows how many decades ago, to keep the wind out. The huge old open fireplace served to introduce air and dissipate the heat. No wonder it was so difficult for consumption germs to thrive midst such uncongenial surroundings, in those airy, jolly log huts of old. Of late years this particular germ, here as in other countries, has become quite a pet, and is generally provided with all the impure air he wants, rewarding his



Midnight Sun.



Reindeer Among the Snows.

Tom
Lundberg

caretakers with lingering tortures and almost certain death.

The house had birch bark on its roof for shingles, with turf laid thereon, to hold them down. The grass grows green as you please up there; and also little trees that have nowhere else to go. The rascally goats sometimes hop up here, peer into the chimney or perch thereon, scratching and tearing about generally, to the best of their ability. To hinder such pranks, old boards or planks are often placed over the sod as a protection.

From the door of the hut I had a glorious view of the mighty snowcapped Jotunheim mountains. I felt their beckoning call, as had grandfather, when they drew him on, opening up endless vistas of beauty and grandeur before his entranced vision. I determined to follow in his footsteps, pick up the old bottle for a weapon, and sally on. The friends of his youth were no more, the old hut being the only survivor, and I had no cause to linger.

With all my eyes and interests fixed and centered on the Jotunheim, it was not without something of an effort, that I forced myself to deviate from the road and journey up a frightfully difficult mountain path, to make a visit to an ancient lady, who lived hidden away up there, all by herself, not far from the clouds, and who, I had been told, might have in her keep, a possible store of recollections about grandfather. It was an arduous climb, and a lonely place, which, all of a sudden, reminded me that I might possibly be overtaken, right here, by a bad man or two. Two seconds later I was taken with laughter, for, whenever was a tramp known to invite trouble to the extent of performing a climb like this, when in the full possession of his faculties and freedom.

Wandering on, I finally made out something which I decided was either a hut, another queer looking pile of

stones, or a grotesquely shaped boulder. Whatever it was, it struck me as being a freak arrangement anyhow, marring the face of nature. When I finally reached it, I knocked on the likeliest place on the dilapidated wall, having the semblance of a door, and awaited with some trepidation, results. I heartily wished I had never been allowed to read about hags and ogres. My knock had a disturbing effect, for soon something stirred. Now it came! It clamped heavily along on the floor and I thus made out, that the occupant, of whatever form or feature, walked on wooden shoes. This reassured me. Ten times rather that, than a padded, stealthy tread. The latch clicked,—heart stood still—the door creaked ajar, and before me, stood peering out, a grayhaired old woman of a very masculine front, but with a reassuring beam in her bright, alert eyes. After the usual greetings, she invited me in, saying: "Be welcome. I am here alone, but the Lord bides with me." She grew immediately curious, and asked if I might perhaps be the "Lensmand" (sheriff), or some such official. I quickly acquainted her with the fact that I did not have that honor, being merely a plain American citizen, searching high and low for relatives, adding, also, that I was the son of Martha Karine, daughter of Nils Anderson Follinglo. She gazed long and tensely at me, finally exclaiming: "You do not mean to say that our Nils Anderson went to America, had a daughter and a grandson, and that you are he, and have come all the way from America to tell me so!" I could not deny it. "Yes," she continued, "I knew Nils very well. There is no relationship, but we were brought up together as children, my mother being his step mother."

The dead had come back to life. I had buried my grandfather's friends all too soon. She was eighty years old and chipper as might be, there being about her, as

yet, not the faintest suggestion of being dead, whatever. She was concerned about my comfort after the tiresome, difficult climb, and immediately began bustling about to prepare me a cup of warm coffee, and other good things—what might it not be. Every now and then she would pause to contemplate the strange, new figure before her and say, as if to herself: "How wonderful! To think a grandchild of Nils, with whom I used to play, oh, so long ago! should come to visit me. What does it all mean? The good Lord knows." She invited me to the table with a heartiness of manner, seemingly, as if she would willingly have given her all, in addition, to what she had to offer. She had fetched some coarse black bread and cheese from a horrible looking hole under the house, and I am sure I do not know how clean it was, but I would have eaten it if it had been old leather. Who would want to hurt her kind old heart. She gave a finishing touch to my cup, inside and out, wiping it with her old, rusty fingers, so as to be sure that it would be nice and clean. She stooped with much labor to wash the dishes in an old iron pot, containing cold water, placed conveniently on the floor. The wiping cloth was not dirty, but of an indescribable pattern. The coffee was black as night, she having no milk to offer—the cow was kept during summer at a distant "sæter" (Mt. summer pasture)—and strong as such a brew could possibly be concocted. Although knowing it to be as poison, I tasted of it as if sipping nectar. She insisted on pouring me another cup and still another, but I managed to fetch up on the defensive, being used to it, having been fairly deluged with coffee by well meaning Norwegians the whole summer. Perhaps this continual coffee sipping, accounts for the fact that quite many of them, especially among the country people, are well nigh toothless.

After our repast, she asked me to lean back in my chair, make myself comfortable, and take all the enjoyment possible. Meantime, she lit her pipe, and between long drawn valiant puffs, told her story. Can I forget her, as she sat there, with her venerable, kindly face beaming upon me, the smoke from her pipe forming a halo about her head,—and thanks be to the draft from the open fireplace behind her, hindering it from getting so thick I couldn't see her. She thought it remarkable that I understood her speech, and could hardly put together and believe the fact, that I was really foreign born, and yet able to speak her language.

She told me she had worked uphill all her life, yet she knew of people who had fared worse. She had never been else than a poor, hard working tenant, and for the last twenty years the invalidism of her husband had added weight to her burden, but, thanks be to God, who had given her a strong back, she had been able to hustle, dig and scrape, with sufficient energy to support them both. The greatest sorrow she had known, was, when they carried him away to the church yard, leaving her utterly lone, with only herself to provide for. Her only daughter had gone to America, with the youth of her choice, and after some years they sent home the news that she had contracted an incurable disease which resulted, finally, in the loss of her reason. This was a terrible blow, and she wouldn't complain, but it was so very hard for her to resign herself to it. But God would help her. She exhibited with childish delight, letters from her little American granddaughters. She found a vast deal of pleasure in perusing these missives, though she could not read them. The childish scrawl appeared to her an exhibition of unusual talent; each crude twist and turn, blot or dot, bearing evidence of remarkable intelligence

and skill. During my reading of them, she poured forth a running accompaniment of audible comments, her face expressive of much wonder at my proficiency in voicing in living, spoken language, those beloved, uncertain, ink tracings.

"Did you know, good sir, that your grandpa was a mighty lively youngster, and that his jolly jokes and happy pranks were without end? Still they were as nothing compared to those of your great grandfather, who remained a fun maker, all his born days. He was an itinerant blacksmith. Once when happening to tarry in the kitchen, when the mush was cooking, he saw the lady of the house throw the necessary salt into it, having done which, she left the room. Directly, the daughter entered, and not thinking the salting had been attended to, did so herself. Upon seeing this, and finding himself alone, your great grandfather grabbed a huge salty handful and slung it into the kettle, stirring the mixture, thoroughly and conscientiously. At the table all made wry faces over the grewsome mess set before them. The mother looked at the daughter, and the daughter at the mother, whereupon, they both knew. The two then happened to look at Andrew, who appeared entirely too natural, and suddenly, he knew, they knew. He soberly explained to the family, that, as all the others who entered the room, had been in the habit of plying salt at that kettle, he thought it only his duty, also, to do so. Wherever he was treated shabbily by his customers, he would threaten to revenge himself by putting the steel into the back of their scythes, instead of on the edge. If he happened to stop at a place where the housewife was dirty and slovenly, he would, sometimes, hide away the knives and spoons, thus enabling him to make an excuse for not eating there." And many other such stories, the old lady told, in

the hazy atmosphere of her tiny little sitting room, that day.

When she was to have her picture taken, she made a partial change of her habiliments right before me, having so much to talk about that she could not spare the time to go into another room to do it.

Just before my departure, she asked me to read a chapter, to her, from the Bible. She reverently laid away the old pipe beside her spectacles, folded her hands, and listened with close attention. The tobacco smoke lingered lovingly about her rapt features while I read, and though it looked odd, it struck me as being no more out of place than when preachers or others, envelop themselves in clouds of similar substance, enjoyed, virtuously and contentedly, promptly at the close of services. She had her smoke just preceding the exercises, they immediately after.

My advent had awakened many memories; she owned that her mind acted as if she were in a trance. She averred, again and again, that it was the most unheard of thing that a grandson of Nils should come to seek her out this way, after all these years. Having aroused her feelings so, the parting became cruel. I heard afterwards that the lonely old soul had not slept a wink the night following.

As I descended to the road on my way to the hills, I turned about and saw, of all rainbows, the most beautiful, hovering over old Marit's hut. In another moment, the afternoon sun came peeping out, flinging its sparkling rays against her window, and though I could not make out the hut, the panes stared forth as living balls of fire, supporting shafts of gold penetrating far into the valley and all about. Thus did Marit's mountain home pass from my sight.

The next morning found me busy climbing the lesser heights on the left, for I was determined, while passing this way, to get a glimpse of the mountain hotel at Fosheim's "sæter," and the surrounding scenery as well. It has become all the rage for city dwellers to flee to these sæter hotels during high summer, to bask in jolly friendships, "rømmekolle," and the bracing mountain air. The pretty little sæter cows turned loose above the clouds, in valleys between the snow drifts, find a sufficient supply of the rare, succulent grasses, to satisfy their wants and fill their milk bags, these, in turn, being greedily tapped by the mountain idlers. To say one is hungry, up here, is but a meaningless phrase, but to say that one feels continually like a famished Russian wolf, better describes the situation; this being the normal, or if you will, abnormal state of the appetite. All are ashamed of themselves during the race at dinner, partaking amply—slyly, hurriedly, chokingly—yet leaving the table in discontent, secretly wishing for more. The potatoes were as snow flakes, and the venison quite too tempting. "Rømmekolle," is pure angels' food, being milk with raised cream, powdered, on top, with ground toast and sugar.

I was in great luck, for I unearthed a distant relative in the person of the manager of the hotel, and at dinner, I was given gratis, the seat of honor among 150 guests. I felt truly distinguished. A famous kapelmæster from Copenhagen, and an aristocratic looking professor from the university of Christiania, were placed one on either side of me, and although being desperately hungry, I felt it due them, that I ought to try to appear as though this little matter of eating, in such splendid presence, was quite immaterial. I am afraid some of our near neighbors waxed warm under a similar strain; the professor, meanwhile, remaining blissfully oblivious of the effect of

the sublimity of his presence, seeing little, and caring not a continental, what the others did. It is a matter of speculation, how that hungry crowd would have acted, if the unwritten law had not held us tied. Oh, for a chance to lift that soup bowl bodily, and for once, to finger and toss to our heart's content. But, nothing such happened, for, remarkably enough, the laws of conventionality, which we may break if we will, hold firmer sway than those of the state.

After dinner we were tumbled unceremoniously out upon the spacious veranda, for coffee. As I sat sipping the nerve upsetting liquid, I gazed with much admiration on the scene far below. The beautiful Strand fjord lay sunning, glossy and placid in its chosen haunts, with not a ripple to intrude upon its face. Pretty Follinglo lay peeping out from its corner far in the distance, with hundreds of other small farms lying prettily scattered about, on either shore of the narrow fjord skirting the parallel stretch of green crested hills. Little patches of irregular fields, variously conceived, made the variety monotonous; the variegated scene reminding one of nothing else so much as a huge crazy quilt. The nearby water-falls kept up their eternal din; though interesting to see, they are bothersome to the ear and get on the nerves. It cannot but be a great trial to the man who lives close by, to have this noise everlastingly drummed into him. My eyes, eternally fed by the livelong Iowa prairie prospect, feasted joyously on the new food set before them in the form of these valleys and fjords, the sæters, the distant mountain tops with their perpetual white coverings—which, by the way, reminds me that I must be getting on, for I am to climb them.

On the steps, going out, I was confronted by a Norwegian engineer who lives in Berlin and who, seeing I

was an American, volunteered the information that he had just visited America, but had found it dull. "There is noise enough, and power enough, the same, for instance, as in that water fall over there, but I missed life. Your people are not living, they are just enduring. Our people live on much smaller incomes, and yet glean more pleasure and satisfaction out of existence than yours do." I asked him where he had sojourned. "Pittsburg," said he. "Well, next time you call, linger near the Mississippi for awhile, view the farms and villages in the great middle west, get into the heart of the true America, and then climb up here and tell me your story."

After having delivered my testimony, I hurried along in the wake of two Danish tourists who were taking a short cut down the mountain side, back to the main road. There is nothing more joyously thrilling, than in thus getting into unexplored regions, just so there is some one near to place the blame on, in case of trouble. My fair guides were genuine talkers and no mistake. What funny speech! Their jerky enunciation reminded me of nothing else in the world so much as the cackling of two ducks (provincial dialect). A great number of Germans and Danes invade Norway during the summer tourist season, many coming even in winter. Though for the most part gentle-folk, there happen those among them who are not at all overburdened with modesty, being aggressive in the extreme, talking and acting as if being the only lords left.

The next morning found me on the main avenue, bound for the snow mountains. I determined that nothing should turn me from the road again; that I would make a bee-line along the crooked valley for the very highest point. I found myself walking in the company of some boys and girls hailing from different points, viz,

Christiania and Bergen. They were pupils and teachers out for recreation, and a jolly lot they proved to be. We had a glorious tramp that day.

The smooth, even roads of Norway make it the pedestrian's paradise. The splendid highways fringed with lovely scenery, attract numerous pleasure seekers of various pattern, of whom a great many are unprovided with other carrying vehicles than strong shoes. To think that an American, always on wheels, should have forgotten all about it, and stood, in one season, 350 miles of walking, on roads and rugged by-paths, up hill and down hill, is not recorded with the supposition that it will be readily believed; it is put down only because it belongs here.

We turned around at least 500 times, that day; walking, semi-circularly, along the roadway. The panorama was constantly shifting, both fore and aft. Thus, certain scenes, with a seemingly set expression, would assume an entirely different aspect when we reached them, or viewed them from an opposite direction. Sometimes the road hung precariously on stony ledges looking straight down several hundred feet, we being foolhardy enough to take it. At other times it went in serpentine windings, without any seeming aim or direction, leading into nowhere, but we did not care, we just kept lolling on, following it. There are over 17,000 miles of these floor-like, happy-go-lucky roads in Norway, and it cost sixty cents a head, to build them.

We talked to all the people we met, and they had no objection, for time isn't money at all here. The moment they set eyes on the American, there ensued always a dead stop, for I must needs tell my story, and answer eager questions, about relatives and friends, in all corners of forty-four states.

We enjoyed viewing the mowers, as they attacked the timothy and clover fields with their scythes, bending their bodies into a very correct angle, each time they took a stroke. They picked up the hay with their hands, and hung it upon rails or strings, one above another, to dry. In the harvest field, (oats and barley) the whole family helped, from the aged grandmother, down to the future grandfather, now a mere toddler, who got in the way and made himself a nuisance, meanwhile, looking fully as much occupied as any of them.

We saw many young girls in the grainfields, bending low, scythe in hand, to cut the grain. From their stooping postures they looked at us sideways, as we passed. It was decided that it was hard to withstand anything like that, especially when it had royal red cheeks, a curled up mouth, blue eyes and golden hair. They looked robust and well fed, and not at all overworked.

In spite of their slow-moving propensities the people here have neatly kept farms and homes, and though they generally arrive on the porpoise style, they get there unworried, sound and intact. What we do not to today, we prefer to do tomorrow, is the sum total of the impressions I received, of the tone and tenor of their workaday habits.

People actually live the simple life over here; and although they spend a good deal of time in eating, say four or five times a day, and some coffee spreads besides, slipping in a nap or two on top, they do it utterly without flourishes. This enables the housewife to make her escape out into God's air and sunshine and also to help with the outside work. The women are seen everywhere, even at the polls.

We lingered along the roadside, admiring the flowers, of which, there is an endless variety, and all being so

beautiful that we could not make our choice, hence plucking none, from sheer indecision. Anyway, a flower loses too much of its charm and meaning to be thus, ruthlessly, torn away from its setting. I like to admire the features of each separate kind as they appear, unblemished, on their own domain; it being impossible to fall rightly in love with a lot of pretty faces, kidnapped in a bunch, and dying ones at that. There are almost as many flowers as there is grass, and no wonder the tiny, Jersey-like cows, who eat both, making no discrimination, are such esthetical looking brutes. Sometimes we would forget to go on, tarrying in the woods, studying the trees by the wayside. The spruce is the loveliest, I think, and also the most valuable, for it provides fuel and lumber worth millions. So does, also, the Scotch fir. They grow amicably side by side, but sometimes they part company, the spruce going east, and the Scotch fir wandering towards the rather treeless west coast, where it happens in groves, and also scatteringly, in uninviting places, where the spruce never has the temerity to follow. We saw the jolly fir, breezily waving its arms in the wind, tiptoeing on impossible ledges appearing to be quite bare of soil. The birch loves to have for its companions the spruce and fir, and snuggles in between, wherever there is a chance. Sometimes we could see it sallying bravely forth, forming groves of its own; also, I was greatly surprised to meet with it far up the mountain sides, ever so much higher than either of its companions dared venture. It had grown old and dwarfy looking from the fierce exposure and strenuous climb.

We were careful not to disturb the birds, for it was yet nesting time with some of them, or at least, school time for their homely offspring. There was evidently much tutoring going on, for we could hear snatches of

song and subdued warblings, whenever we had a mind to listen. The school of flying being in session, we were given an opportunity to witness many an amazing flight, ill-starred, and otherwise. We had happened in the midst of the birds' paradise. The various families foregather in the early summer, accordingly as instinct impels them; then there is glorious music in the northland. The sun sits so high in the heavens that it scarcely sets during mid-summer, and the birds just can't go to sleep, when bed-time comes, but rollick around and sing as if their tiny bodies would burst, from joyous exertion. Even human beings catch the contagion, and join in the chorus, inspired thereto by those glorious Norwegian nights.

We brushed elbows with the hog while pursuing the even tenor of our way, no one being surprised, he the least of all. He grunts with joyous satisfaction at it all, the live-long day, and well he may, for he is the most pampered individual in the country. We saw but few homes where they entertained more than one; there being but one pig, for every eight persons, they say. He gets all the left over morsels—the dog just hates him—and is stroked and squeezed by everybody. No wonder he thrives and is so utterly good-natured. In return he yields up his flesh—made from barley, oats and the aforementioned morsels—with merely an expostulating squeal, and the table is forthwith provided with meat, which is tender and fine tasting as a chicken.

For every two persons we met, we might figure on meeting about one hen, scarcely any more, for such is the ratio and proportion. They are rather small, but very spry and useful. They make no pretensions as to breed, taking cheerfully to the "never was born" principle. They cackle, fight and scratch up the garden, like well brought up hens, the world over. They set with

dogged determination, feeling within their rights, for they are quite handy to lay eggs. The rooster, though rather slim and dusty looking, being of an off color, strutted about with the usual amount of arrogance and empty headed concern. There is but one such fellow to manage each flock, and there being no other to dispute his doings, he may crow in peace without being choked off by envious competitors.

Little skunk-like dogs barked earnestly at us, as we passed the premises each one seemed to own. Some big cats lay near the road in deep lethargy, eyes apparently closed and unseeing, motionless—scat, nobody said a word; there ensued a series of sudden hoarse sniffs, several silent black streaks, and in a twinkling, the birds had some highly undesirable companions in the tree tops. They looked hard and unblinkingly at us from above, with sinister, gleaming eyes, beckoning us on and away. At night, they take up the thread, and continue the music ushered in by the song birds by day, in their own way, but from a different station. They are very large cats, with vocal chords of corresponding calibre. The feline choruses of the long winter nights of the Northland are famous.

Troughs of various pattern, indifferent and otherwise, were placed along the roadside, here and there, to catch water from trickling little streams tumbling down the mountain side, providing refreshment for all passers by, man or beast. The horses when thirsty, turn towards these troughs without looking for permission from the driver. And they seem to do most of the managing otherwise as well, for they generally regulate the speed and the number of short stops judged necessary. They never hurry up hill, halting frequently, but down hill they make up for lost time, not because they would rather, but be-

cause it just happens that way. They let themselves fall recklessly forward with a great to-do of clattering hoofs, so as to keep from under the swaying vehicle thundering on behind. They swing their heads every which way to display their independence. They do not enjoy being checked up. It is hardly any use trying. In fact they do not allow it. This overbearing attitude may be explained when considering their scarcity; the number of people, being as 16 to 1 of horses in Norway. When once in a great while we happened to ride behind them in the Norwegian two-wheeled carts commonly in use, we were made to feel all the gyrations of the stiff-necked creature's body; if he stumbled into a rut, we became unwilling partakers in all his motions; when on the trot, he flung us up and down, steadily and painstakingly.

We called at a house for refreshments, and were not turned away. Hospitality is the rule; money-making being, apparently, no object. Though the tourist traffic is bringing in a scent of it, let us hope that the day is far distant, before this comfortable state of affairs will be added. Stout logs had been used in the erection of this house, as also in the other houses in this vicinity, and indeed, practically all over the country. Like the majority of dwellings in this section, it was neither sided nor painted, presenting a rather naked aspect to the world and the elements. The latter had unblushingly laid hand on its golden colored nudity, and in the course of time, overdrawn the logs with a blackish-brownish color. The slate roof looked very pretty. It was brought from the great slate quarry in east Valders. We entered by an entrance door. There is always the matter of an extra door, or so, to hinder outsiders from stepping right into the bosom of the family, the first thing. The rooms were placed somewhat at random, we thought, but as tastes and

customs differ greatly, we will refrain from discussing either. There was a kitchen, living room, bed rooms and even the proverbially unused parlor. There were plenty of chairs and benches, but no rocking chairs. The floors were gay with rag carpets. In each window nodded a pretty house plant. The wall was adorned with an old fashioned clock; pictures of an American bride or two; a nicely ornamented shelf containing copies of the local paper, a few books of devotion, some hymn books and the Bible. No horrid yellow journals littered the floor, or disturbed the serenity of the rather bare, but clean looking walls. There was an air of wholesome calm about it all. No danger of stepping on anyone's toes in a community like this. By the way, wooden shoes are the rule, being also symbols of peace. Whoever heard of a thief, or maurauding villian, prowling about in wooden shoes! And there are few, if any, such, here.

Towards four o'clock, our feet, which had nobly borne the brunt of our exertions so far, clamored for consideration. Though shut off from the scenery, these requisites are partakers, and the moment they offer a plaint, it usually happens that the eye itself, is in ready sympathy, and gladly welcomes a change and rest. The moment we set eyes on the Oylo hotel, we made for it, looking neither to the right nor to the left, ignoring, in deference to our nether appendages, all views and attractions.

Some one has said that to rest is the most delicious of bodily enjoyments, which, if it be true, let us suggest that to eat well prepared food comes next in order. The home-like hostelries, scattered, as by accident, all about, sometimes by the roadside, sometimes far above it, amply provide for these things.

My companions went back per "Kariote," to their hotel, having had enough exercise to last the day. Let it

be here explained, that the reason these vehicles are called "Kariole," is because of the first couple who began using them. They both wanted to bequeath their names to the outfit, the wife's being Kari, and the husband's plain Ole. Kari was set on having her name, alone, perpetuated by the vehicle, but honest Ole wasn't quite satisfied to agree to this. The minister happening by while the dissension was in progress, and being a peacemaker, was struck by a bright idea, he suggesting that they should meet halfway, merge into one, as it were, the same as when he tied the knot the first time, and call it Kari-Ole. Ole liked the idea first rate, and Kari, utterly at a loss for words to continue the argument, maintained a silence which was construed into consent, so "Kariole" they have been called to this day.

I was left to make history all by myself, the next day, and trudged on lonesome enough, murmuring a little against fate which had one day brought me into such hearty companionship with the jolly Finn and the loquacious Ulla, only to tear us ruthlessly and forever apart, the next. Like the little boy who for lack of a playmate made up to a post, I looked about for some such consolation and saw, beckoning to me, not only posts and the cutest fences, but all nature in her smilingest mood decked out with lovely fjords, tumbling waterfalls and majestic snow clad mountains. I took to them at once, being completely enthralled, forgetting for the time being the heyday of yesterday, and the days gone before. And I was glad that I could forget, otherwise the poor little brain would burst from the numerous and all too vivid impressions. One mountain, especially, attracted me, bearing, as it did, an almost personal expression, making question, as it were, with every varying features, of the Thing creeping along at its base. It gave

forth a challenge to discover aught of the wonderful secrets it contained in its innermost bowels, seeing that it exhibited so much on the outside, which, however, as far as the eye could penetrate, only contained one billionth of its mass. The old Vikings had this all figured out and settled. They believed that in the interior were vast rooms where the "Jokuls," the great mountain giants lived. From Jokul comes the name Jotunheim (Home of the Jokuls).

I passed along Vangsmjøsen, the loveliest lake one can see, had bread and cheese at Grindaheim, where I regretted that I wasn't an artist to paint the magnificent surroundings, and pressing on, made haste to reach Skogstad, the last stopping place at the end of the valley, the road here ascending to Framnes, the gateway proper of the mountain wilderness.

I was overtaken by a raincloud first seen magnificently forming in the distance, which, upon nearer approach, mirrored itself beautifully in the lake, flinging, also, its clearly outlined shadow against a precipitous mountain wall across the fjord, and finally without warning, darkening the heavens about, enfolding me in the form of a sudden shower. As I hurried along under my umbrella, I happened to give vent to a profound sneeze, which, to my intense surprise, was heard and enjoyed by a party of pedestrians, some happy female tourists, who had taken refuge under a projecting rock by the roadside. A burst of merriment, of uncontrollable laughter, startled me nearly out of my wits, but I had presence of mind enough to proceed mechanically on, having gotten over the habit of looking furtively behind me on such occasions. I had seen this rollicking crowd far in advance, but who would have dreamed that they should happen to be eavesdropping just at the psychological moment, when

the unlooked for explosion was due to occur. Although it had no effect on the downpour, it dispelled the gloom—for them. Tourists, let loose, are like children; they glory in tomfoolishness.

The mountains were very tall, quite precipitous and ever so wonderfully built on either side as I proceeded along the valley, and see them all I must, but to enjoy them, it became necessary to hold the head back at an extremely uncomfortable angle. It was very fatiguing work; being hard on the eyes, hard to do any swallowing, and the gait became very erratic and uncertain. But it paid. There were glorious sights to be seen up there, and down here, behind, and everywhere. In one place there was a fantastic formation of the cliffs, which looked like a huge decayed tooth set on edge. It appeared as though it might once have been a molar in a Jokul's mouth. There had evidently been big doings in the mountain, when that particular member came out, much loose rock lying scattered about. And what of the travail that preceded it? It must have been an earthquake. In several places I could see by the form, where great big fragments of rock, which I passed, had lain imbedded in the mountain above, before being shook out. In some places there were millions of fragments, large and small, strewn about. I was continually on the look out, and in no little trepidation, on account of missiles that I feared might possibly come hurtling from above, but the rocks all retained their balance that day. During protracted wet spells in the spring, outlying rocks have a tendency to loosen, some being washed out. Though such a thing has happened it is exceedingly seldom anyone is caught by these rocky missiles.

To see the sun from my valley seek its couch early in the afternoon, as its quivering rim took the final peep

over the hoary tops of the Jotunheim, sending an endless profusion of extra rays about, reminding of the final dose flung from the fringe of a passing shower, formed a glorious subject for brush and pencil; but, alas, it will not be caught, for even the cleverest work pales, utterly, before actual creation. As soon as the sun had bid good night, the mountains commenced to frown, and I at once felt rather shut off and hemmed in. I decided then and there, that I would never want to live in a mountain valley. Oh, for a glimpse of my prairie home in the west, where the sun settles in a maze of glory, kissing the earth good night at the proper time, and sending its departing rays lovingly back and with wonderful effect into magical cloud formations, appearing at times similar, and if it were possible, almost an improvement on the mountains themselves.

Skogstad hotel is now one of the has-beens, having been superseded by hotels nearer the snow line, whither the whim of the present day tourist trends. It still has some custom, being situated at the base of the rapid incline which leads into the regions of perpetual snow, but its popularity is rapidly waning, being as nothing compared to what it was in the olden days, before the time of automobiles and mountain hostleries. The course of the tourist stream is changeable and erratic. Where in places it flows steadily and unceasingly, it may unexpectedly take a spasmodic turn, and eventually dwindle away, forming a course in another direction, abandoning its former haunts nearly altogether. As new fields are conquered, hotels spring up as if by magic, to meet all demands. In one place, where I arrived tired, footsore and hungry, instead of meeting with the usual smiling face of an ever attentive maid at the door, my own answering smile being all prepared, it—the conquering smile—faded

sadly and sorrowfully away, when, in answer to my knock, what I thought to be the welcome patter of pretty feet, proved to be the scampering of rats. I had struck an abandoned house.

To walk up a gradual incline is a conundrum to the senses, it being difficult to embrace as a reality, that which the eye, usually so reliable, refuses to accept. But one has to, in spite of the version of the eyes reporting it to be level, the tired legs and the short quick breaths unerringly revealing the true situation; you are walking up hill and no mistake. After much hard breathing and thumping of the heart, I arrived at a place where the road forked. Here I was in a quandary, not being fully decided whether I wanted to take the west fork, which led past File mountain, the road which grandfather took, or, whether I should make a detour, go northeast through darkest Jotunheim, climb Galdhøpiggen mountain and later, after having passed through Lom and Sogn, recover grandfather's tracks at Lardalsören. A voice whispered: You are not prepared for such a journey. Another said: You are afraid! I was on my mettle at once, and flung back almost without thinking: I will climb Galdhøpiggen, just because I am afraid, so there, and I did, but not yet. The die was cast, and I struck out hurriedly to the right, once the decision was made, so as to be quickly rid of prudent questionings and uncertainties.

After a little, I met with some road laborers, who told me I could gain much time by taking a short cut up the mountain side instead of following the windings of the main road. I decided to take that road. I felt that I was in for it now, anyway, hence might as well begin with a mild adventure at once, thus becoming gradually used to them by getting a proper foretaste. The eyes did not

try to fool me here, it being useless, the steepness being so dense that it rose up right before me and I could touch it by reaching out my hands. I met some sweet faced, patient looking cows on one of the madly careening slopes, who gazed mildly and questioningly at me, as if to say: We are sorry for you! We are looking for grass, otherwise we wouldn't be here. Nor would I, had I known the territory. The cows seeming to realize this, sadly lowered their heads as if to show their sympathy, beginning again their usual absent minded cropping. When I finally regained the road, all perspiration, eyes bulging, blood boiling, I was obliged to rest, and speculated the while on the Foolishness of Man in general. The most galling of all was when getting up to go, I felt stiff. Some lady tourists who stayed by the road had, meanwhile, porpoise like, almost caught up with the "palpitating hare," finally passing him gaily by, immaculate as ever.

The spruce, the fir, and the birch, had said their good-byes, each in their turn, and I now found myself at a height where I had to console myself with mere mountain moss, blueberries and stray mountain flowers. In sunny, highly favored places, there grow tufts of grass at surprisingly high altitudes. The sheep and even the cattle, not to mention the ubiquitous goat, hunt these choice tidbits. When in the heights one may suddenly be startled by moving things, which may be taken for mountain hobgoblins or even worse, and amidst the strange surroundings, the peculiar colorings and predominating greyish tone of it all, it takes the untrained eye quite awhile to know which is which; how to decide the difference between rolling stones, gnomes, or a morsel hunting goat. The poor eye is continually at a sad loss in such odd surroundings, for neither can it judge distances

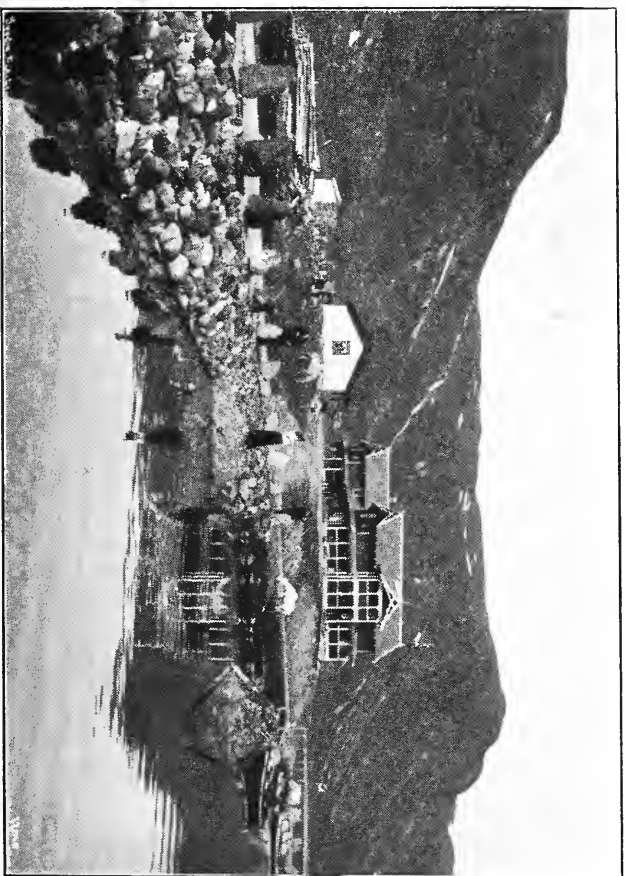
properly, nor rightly interpret colorings.

Proceeding on, I came upon a great number of stones, large and small, dropped from nowhere, scattered loosely about on the mountain tops. Some lay near the edges ready to fall, yet hesitating, as if dreading to let go, on account of the fearful drop. While pondering the peculiar action of nature, in thus carelessly spilling things about, my contemplations were disturbed by some autos, which sped quickly by, leaving me as rapidly as they came, only to disappear in the clouds. It looked comfortable on those fairy-vehicled-cushions, but after examining into the curvatures and embankments of the narrow roadway, I decided that it looked dangerous, infinitely preferring to remain on the cushions of my own feet.

I caught up with the autos at Framnes hotel, placed at the so-called portal of the Jotunheim. It stands at the very edge of Tyinn lake, one of the highest, if not the highest, of mountain lakes in Norway, of any size. It is wholly surrounded by snow peaks. The event of the-day was dinner, as usual. We eat to live, of course, but up here everybody bangs the old adage upside down and just bolts, in rapturous, mouth-filling desire, blessing the delicious craving for food. We had venison, fish, potatoes and gravy; and rice pudding with blueberries and cream! There was but a tiny speck of bread on the table; Norwegians only nibble small morsels of it, for dinner. The guests rushed together, pell mell, like old acquaintances, forgetting all about introductions and such, having discarded all but the most pressing of forms and conventions, when they passed the cloud line. After the afternoon coffee, the majority boarded a modest little motor-boat which had slipped in, ever so quietly, during the half-stupor, following upon dinner. The tiny craft

looked so unreal in these surroundings that we hesitated about trusting our precious selves into its frail keeping. But it suddenly took to blustering, showing that it was in for business, rushing off with its party of dawdling dreamers, before we were fully aware of what was being done to us. We could see nothing at any distance, on account of a shower of rain that followed faithfully at our heels, remaining, also, a few steps in advance nearly the entire distance. To me, it was a refreshing sight, because it came down like a real western shower; not the usual tiresome drizzle that is so commonly precipitated in Norway. As we did not have much else to occupy our attention, we watched with curious interest the drops as they fell, with many a splash, into the seemingly ever unprepared, unsuspecting, yielding, bosom of the lake. There were looking glasses slanting inwards over the cabin, just above the windows, and the reflection in them, from the water immediately beneath, made it appear as if we were sailing upside down, or in a sub-marine boat, with windows in the roof. The effect was weird in the extreme; we decided that we were in a sure-enough fairy boat after all. As the shower took away the view, our field-glasses and other sight-seeing paraphernalia remained of no use, so we fell to using the old ordinary eye, also, having had our fill of watching the rain, we took to examining each other. Penned up, face to face, we had an excellent opportunity to size each other up. What, after all, is so interesting as this furtive analysis of all these funny faces, barring, of course, always your own.

The queer way one English lady was dressed, and her really wonderful accent and enunciation, proved, to our satisfaction, that we had made no mistake about the boat being of the Munchausen type. She herded an unwilling,



Bygdin, Eidsbugården.



Strandfjord, Valdres.

unappreciative husband about, fore and aft, and everywhere, who yawned in answer to her talk. We liked her, though, for she made company, and showered pleasant looks about. Blessed be the fellow traveller who doesn't look glum and isn't above talking about nothing, especially in a fog, or, when it rains. The captain, engineer and ticket puncher, was a one man combination, looking, meanwhile, for all the world, like a dried up, wrinkly yank. And, sure enough, he had haunted Columbia's shores for quite a number of years as boss thresher and engineer, but had now, for reasons best known to himself, struck the native heath once more. He thought he handled English, as though he knew no other language, but no one else thought so. I have met several such homing birds, who claim they have forgotten the only language they really know, in, say six years' stay in America, and upon their return, pester the natives and others with a conglomeration nobody can stay or grasp.

The other passengers consisted mostly of Norwegians and Danes who were all so quiet and unassuming, that they disappeared, as it were, in the general landscape, reminding one, with their yellowish, gutta percha coats and wraps, of kahki colored soldiers.

While on board this boat I learned that the outlets of the twin lakes Tyinn and Bygdin, are to be dammed up, making them several feet deeper, thus imprisoning countless cubic feet more of the inflow, enabling the power plants to tap therefrom, a steady supply of water the year around. It is led through big iron pipes into the valleys, thousands of feet below, plunging downwards with incredible swiftmess and a mighty onslaught of power.

The busy motor labored steadily for over an hour to fetch us over this lazy mountain pool and once

across, we were hailed with vociferous acclaim by the guests and proprietor of Tyinnholm hotel. But I was obliged to forego the pleasure of closer comradeship, being due to climb "Skindheggen" and reach "Eidsbugaren," before nightfall.

I found Eidsbugaren hotel situated about half an hours walk from Lake Tyinn, overlooking Lake Bygdin. The road leading to it had been well worked as far as the hotel, but dwindled into a mere mountain path beyond it. Having come about half ways, I fell in with an old man who met my advances most heartily, volunteering to deliver to me all the information he possessed, regarding the mountain I wished to climb. It lay on our right ever so unassuming; but I hadn't climbed it yet. The old man told me he had climbed it once, taking the path which led from Eidsbugaren. I asked him if I could reach the top by taking a short cut right across from where we stood. He thought, perhaps I might. And if there was any danger of my sinking into bogs, crashing through treacherous ice coverings, or some such thing. "Possibly not." With such solid assurance to gird and strengthen my feet, I set bravely forth. A lady to whom I had delivered greetings at Tyinnholm hotel, happening to pass by, regarded me fixedly as though taking her last look.

I started off full speed at once, like genuine green-horns nearly always do. On account of the indescribable roughness of the ground, my steps were uneven and irregular. Sometimes the legs went sideways, missing the mark entirely, leaving the feet to grope tremblingly for another foothold, or going beyond my control altogether. I made quite rapid headway in my own style, meanwhile, getting most uncomfortably warm, obtaining relief only by flinging open my coat and vest to the breeze. There were no trees, but plenty of moss and

characterless stones, with here and there wisps of grass gone astray. There were innumerable bothersome little bogs and valleys. I experienced a tremendous shrinking each time I must needs venture out on those horrid bog things. But they bore me up most obligingly and scarcely a tremor did I feel. When passing through the little valleys, I felt very lonesome, for I was quite shut off from the world, the view being obstructed in every direction, except directly overhead, where the familiar, friendly old blue gave encouragement, cheerily beckoning me on. Each time I climbed out of the valleys, I figured on stepping out near the mountain top, which seemed but a stone's throw away, but such never happened. Yet, after numberless repetitions and disappointments, I finally became possessed of the impression that I had actually gained on that elusive top some, but not much. My exertions became frantic, and happening now for the first time to glance around, I was startled at the height I had already attained. The road looked no bigger than a piece of twine; the hotels resembled match-boxes. This moment's halt convinced me, also, that I had a heart. It had become the seat of a lively turmoil, sending the blood coursing riotously through the body and demanding an enormous amount of extra breathing to keep it going. It saw to a great many things to which I had never given any thought, the perspiration part, especially, being particularly well attended to. My gaze was lifted for an instant from below and I had a glimpse of glories soon to be, but I resolutely shut my eyes to them, till I might enjoy them undisturbed from the outlook at the top. My head would turn now and then in spite of myself and the eyes, being off guard, couldn't help taking furtive peeps, blaming meanwhile, the restless head for delivering them into temptation. What

could one do with such unruly members. I simply refused to accept or believe what they would tell, and hence, do not report it.

After a well-nigh interminable climb over moss banks and other banks, spiteful little mountain brooklets, antique snow beds that spoke with a voice of hollowness underneath, acres of loose rocks and boulders, where the water hissed between and where missteps and tricky stones nearly sent me sprawling; after all this, and more besides, I finally arrived, panting at the top.

I was not in an esthetical mood the first minute or two, and exerted, therefore, all my will power to hold the greedy eyes in leash, till all the necessary faculties would be in fitting condition to appreciate things, accordingly as those nimble spies gathered in the data.

Soon after my arrival the clouds flitted obligingly apart enabling the setting sun to scatter its parting rays profusely about, richly enhancing the wonders of the scene I turned to gaze upon.

During the raptures of vision which followed, the function of breathing momentarily ceased, and in the all-pervading stillness there floated earthwards, spoken as from afar, the inspired utterance: "Lord what am I that Thou art mindful of me." The unutterable smallness of self became so apparent, that it loomed up like a giant before me, threatening to crush me altogether. I had to crack a smile though, at those big old mountains that had to stand there so helplessly still, while this disappearing atom scratched about perfectly as he pleased, in their very faces. I expanded, a little, while thus occupied, knowing, that, after all, any such spirit-equipped little creature, really looms bigger before its Maker, than all the hills in Jotunheim.

The numerous peaks appeared like a forest of swarthy

icles pointing variously, in weird attitudes, into the dome of the heavens. A few were as the driven snow, and such it actually was, which had, presumably, lodged there in the early days of creation and which to this day, thanks to the protection of the cold, had held the other elements at bay. In places it was blue, which was nothing but the underlying ice with the snow removed, also, especially near the mouth of the glacier, it peeped through, with greenish ogre-like eyes and broken features, showing of the fearful grind and pressure of the ages. The snow and ice beds show various depths, having filled in of their own ample substance, the irregular ruts between the peaks. Here and there, right through the midst of the snow fields, could be seen rising the head of some unruly rock formation which would not remain covered. There were many curious designs executed in ice and snow. The majority of the rocks had assumed grotesque shapes, forming, generally and altogether, a highly freakish arrangement.

In its downward course the setting sun threw its rays lavishly about, shifting manyhued colorings from place to place, making the scenery play hide and seek, as it were. Between my mountain and the sun, the hither side of the distant peaks showed forbidding, but the summits were rimmed as with purest gold. Turning away from the sun toward the opposite side, revealed to view the full glory of sky and mountain as the departing orb of day, twice magnified, and robed its loveliest, threw back the good night kiss.

Glancing about I took note of a greyish looking object creeping carefully up the mountain side toward me. It was not a wolf, dear reader, only a bit of fog, a thing far more dangerous than a wolf, coming as a harbinger of evil, and settling like a pall over my spirits and the

scenery. At the sight of it I made the same preparatory motions as the man in the moving picture does, when he wants to be quick, and then just flew down the mountain side.

Ever so many have told me that they find it less agreeable to scramble down a steep incline, than to ascend it. I have found this to be true, and all the muscles of the legs confirm it. The reason is this: When going up, the lower leg is often allowed to stand restfully upright while its companion is seeking a footing. The moment this is attended to, the nether one gives a good solid push just when leaving the ground, thus helping to lift itself and the body, in conjunction with the hoisting one. When going down there is scarcely ever any straight leg, the one being almost always held in a fearfully tiresome, continually shifting, variable angle, the other remaining, meanwhile, as a dead weight on its overburdened companion, while feeling around for another stepping place. There is this advantage in favor of the descent, though; it goes faster. Sometimes the advance is so rapid that the legs are not equal to the task imposed upon them, whereupon they retaliate and take a fling, just letting the body roll. This enables these busy members to snatch a few moments respite while still doing business in a general way. Often they get bruised on such haphazard excursions and then the mountain climber who has to claim them, wishes he could transfer the seat of pain to less important parts, for the time being.

Though the fog reached out threateningly, the main body of it never caught me, and I arrived at my destination hale and wholeskinned, but drenched throughout, from the incessant action of overwilling pores. They had been on the lookout for me at the hotel, my approach

having been noted even by the lady manager, who appeared before me in the guise of a mountain fairy dressed in fantastic country custom, she having come far up the road to offer the hand of welcome. I had not often been made so much of, and considering the exalted state of my feelings, all 'this kind' attention proved to be almost more than I could tranquilly bear. The situation was saved by the wise one in advance offering a few commonplace remarks, letting me gently down to earth again. My old road acquaintance had worried a great deal, and when finally the prodigal turned up, he beamed and cackled as only a friendly old man can or will do. The table was piled high with good things. The young fairy thing existed for nothing else than to hover near and see that the belated guest was properly served, he in turn forgetting entirely that she was paid to do it, that others were treated just as considerately, etc., etc. The other guests swarmed away from the fireplace to give the newly arrived wanderer the most comfortable place, nothing being too good to offer a stranger in straits.

Human companionship is a mighty good thing, my lonesome mountain trip had taught me that, sharply whetting my desire for it. At such times one can hardly refrain from giggling at every word that is said, nor from wanting to caress every shoulder, or slap every knee within arm's reach. We smiled lovingly at each other above smoking pipes and I remember taking deep draughts of the smoke ridden air, smoke that had already explored the recesses of every man's lungs in the room and which, otherwise, would have been obnoxious to me, but was now tolerated, yea enjoyed, considering the occasion. In our readiness to laugh, the climax of every story told was killed, the noise of mirth utterly overwhelming the vehicle which should give it cause.

We were put to bed, one apiece, in single, narrow little beds with a board in front to hinder us from tumbling out. Broadly speaking, this gives the Norwegian a certain sense of security when he sleeps. For a covering I had a quilt stuffed with feathers, but feeling chilly in the cool rarefied mountain air, after my recent frenzied exertions, I added two more, belonging to unused beds in the same tiny room, snuggling happily underneath with deep chuckles of contentment.

It was a long time before I felt any drowsiness, having exerted myself too violently during the day, being besides, occupied with the thought that it would soon grow dark which, however, it did not do, remaining light enough to read without a light the night through. I lay long watching the snow topped mountains through my window, being utterly fascinated by their hypnotic, drawing power. So tense became my gaze, that they finally took to moving, exchanging position, nodding to each other, and many other such ridiculous things. After they took to dancing, I do not remember clearly any more, only, I had a vague feeling as of being under them and that they were all feathers. I made a desperate effort to shake them off, and awoke just in time to see the two upper feather mattresses sliding to the floor. I was excruciatingly wide awake on the instant, feeling, at the same time, a desperate pang of hunger. This I was luckily enabled to satisfy by devouring the lunch the hotel maids had prepared for an early morning start, remaining utterly careless as to whether there would be a recurrence of hunger then or not.

There was no more dreaming for me that night, the body refusing to become quiescent after having been forced into such rapturous torments the day previous. We were to start for Gjendeboden at six, but as the Dane

and his daughter who were to accompany me, didn't show up, even after I had waited half an hour for them, I started out alone. Just before leaving, I viewed the hut of the poet Vinje where years ago he used to hie into the solitude of the mountains to create lofty verse to set future generations dreaming.

My way led me over a narrow log, nearly two rods long, spanning a rushing mountain torrent, where the swirl and turmoil drove the passerby nearly distracted, as with wildly waving arms, it hissed on, beckoning, with frightful gestures, possible victims into its whirling embrace. When crossing a bridge like this, it would be more agreeable if one could look towards the heavens above, and not in the direction of the horrors below, but as the eyes are required to be about the feet, and as there are no normal eyes that will, on occasion, obligingly refrain from rendering a perspective, it is small wonder a person becomes dizzy and prone to topple over. Finding nothing but cow tracks beyond the log, it made me wonder if I had unwittingly come in the wake of the kine, instead of following the paths of my own kind. I kept moving on though, till even the cow tracks disappeared, at which time, I decided to pause and reconnoiter. I then took my first look downwards, toward the hotel, and saw to my surprise, that several people were leveling their glasses at me. I comprehended the situation at once. I was on the wrong track! But I wouldn't own up before all those people, and suddenly sat down, as if allowing myself a much needed rest. I sat on pins ends for awhile, but soon tiring of this, I commenced picking flowers, meanwhile, sauntering idly back in the direction I had come. After having gathered a bouquet large enough to occupy several baskets, and rested more than amply in return for the extra effort of yesterday,

the Dane and his daughter appeared astride each a horse. I silently fell in with them and my secret was safe; no one knew I had been lost.

We meandered along the shores of Lake Bygdin for an hour or so before beginning the steep climb which leads over the high eminence separating it from its twin lake, Gjende. Here the Dane and his daughter were obliged to dismount, as the ponies had all they could do to hoist along their own bodies in such a terrible uphill place, let alone the added weight of an unskilled rider. The good old Dane would fain have ridden for his heart was weak, and noting a huge waterfall near our path, exclaimed: "O, why is that water so uselessly toppling over the cliff yonder? If it was harnessed to an elevator, I could become a passenger, and be spared the torture of this climb." Oh fie! to think of spoiling the picturesqueness of old Jotunheim by putting in such contraptions as that. Please allow us to get into the mountains, to a taste of the primitive, and be rid of modern vehicles for a day.

The rarefied mountain air was expelled as soon as it was drawn in, the lungs finding it weak and unsatisfactory, yet compelled to effect its use. The heart would, now and then, slip a cog or two in sympathy—thus quoth the Dane. His seventeen-year-old minx of a daughter sped like a goat up the incline, being seemingly unaware of the presence of any such organ, she having, who knows, perhaps already lost it. She edged as closely as possible to where the leaping waters roared and thundered. There is peculiar fascination in tempting fate, especially for young folks, and to some, not the least when standing on the brink of a precipice, or beside a roaring waterfall. The seething, hissing water seemed to invite participation in its frightful play, the flying forms

of foam reaching out with beckoning arms, as if eager to caress and clasp the dizzy victim in their hollow embrace. No wonder the old experienced Dane held his hand ready to hinder the swaying of the thoughtless thing leaning over the abyss, should the call of the swirling, maddening element enthrall her senses.

Once past the steepest places the Dane and his daughter mounted their respective steeds again, I following behind, supporting the rear, in the same fashion as before. Though we did not pass over any snow drifts, we met with but very little vegetation, even the moss having hied away, elsewhere, to seek a more favorable nestling place. There were bare, dreary looking rocks below and above, around us and everywhere, of various sizes and descriptions, also, innumerable loose stones of no particular pattern, lying in wait along our path, seemingly met on purpose to dispute our progress and make worry. The ponies, however, through much practice had become pretty well used to them. It was interesting to watch their respective legs, from behind, as they were hoisted and flung every which way, to avoid those horrid obstructions. Their hind legs, especially, seemed to have eyes of their own.

While we were in the midst of this dreary region where noise seldom intrudes, all forms of life keeping a proper distance, the stillness was suddenly disturbed and riven sunder, by the shrill, penetrating scream of an eagle. Soon its mate joined in with a still wilder cry, and their various voices blending, in vociferous protest, told us very plainly that they not only saw us, but hotly resented our intrusion. It appeared that they had their home on yon peak to the left. Oh, for a peek, said the girl, at the nest and the ugly nestlings, with its halo of bleached bones and bloody feathers! Upon taking thought she be-

lieved she would as lief not see it, in consideration of its gory aspect, and being that the owners were hopping mad, and had talons. Besides it would be a matter of some effort to reach it, the eagles, true to their instinct, having selected their family retreat, even in this out of the way place, in the most inaccessible spot to be found.

Having come about half way, we reached a level place where grass had dared to take root, even having had the temerity to turn the place into a pale green. Here we met a couple of old folks, an aged minister and his wife, who sat eating bread and cheese, hungry and happy, and chipper as could be. How we all admired them! To think of their amiable boldness in pushing into these wilds on such tottering limbs, and at their time of life! They loved the mountains they said, and could not stay away. They told us of another aged enthusiast, aged seventy-nine, who this summer made his thirtieth annual climb. May he make thirty more!

After the halt, the ponies walked up briskly, having in view the feed boxes at Gjendebøden, and being also entered upon the downward incline, which led to our destination. They had evidently rested well the day previous and now made use of the accumulated, stored up strength, in rapidly steering their legs away from the pair trying to keep up the rythm from behind, viz, my own tired ones, long ago exhausted from not having gone to sleep the night before. I thought the Dane would have divined my predicament, would have dismounted to stretch his long legs a bit, and allowed my trembling ones a brief respite aback his sprightly steed, but, this did not seem to occur to him. Our divinity in front forgot entirely and swung joyfully along in splendid style, the faster the better. But I determined not to get left, hating to be mooning around alone, so took a supply of

strength left over from former times, let the will take command, and was surprised to find how readily the drooping spirits, legs and all, acted up to its promptings. I held to the wake of the merciless thing in front and came to the hotel hot and homely, but just as promptly as she. I was in no particularly sweet mood to return her congratulations, but cheered up a bit when I heard her complain of stiffness, and felt a deep satisfaction in knowing, that the morrow would find her limbs in a much worse condition than mine, she not being used to riding.

By right I ought to have been hungry, but the violent exertion had shoved aside my appetite for the time being. Dinner threatening to become stale, I ate anyhow, but with no relish whatever. The stomach having been left out of consideration for so long, and in the giving out of such an excess of strengthening elixir and sympathy to the legs, had received a shock, had been partly stunned, and refused to report anything either in regard to emptiness or satiety. It allowed me to eat or quit eating without any intervention on its part, in deference to the Will, which Reason had allowed to take the supremacy. I got up from the table with feelings and sensations as of a man having gone through a useless ceremony, of having continued a purposeless habit, which, however, I felt intuitively, that I could not lightly break away from. Leaning back in my chair, I noted a certain blurring before the eyes, upon which, I decided to take a nap and invite sleep to straighten out the disproportionableness.

I slept in a newly built pine cottage, where the rooms were of the tiniest, and the partitions scarcely more than screens, from whence the sighs and snores of the various occupants were wafted abroad in all fulsomeness for the common enjoyment of all. But as sleep is common

property in the mountains, few were disturbed. All the beds creaked and were rather hard but each, without grumbling, took to his couch enthralled by the sweet, soothing call of nature, forgetting all about the usual springs and feathers and pillows of down. The furnishings were, otherwise, beautifully simple, but as "man wants but little here below," no one seemed surprised in being thus forestalled. The looking glass discovered irregularity of feature where none had existed before; the aquiline nose of yesterday partaking of crookedness by merely a glance into this cave of conjurement opening out from the wall. The soap was marked "extra," if wanted at all. To avoid ceremony, many enjoyed the thrill of making their ablutions, soapless, in immaculate drippings of snow, such being cold though not hard. There was no dearth of cleanliness; and good cheer abounded, though many modern conveniences lacked. Transportation is difficult, hence such simplicity of affairs. But no one lived the less fully, thought less clearly, or aspired less nobly, because of the lack of a few extra notions, which, at home, have grown to be part and parcel of our very selves. In the mountains one comes to think that too much invention makes us blase, inclining us to turn away from the poetry of life.

One family had turned out en masse, having hied away from too much civilization clad in bloomers, woolen jackets built according to the body, Santa Claus caps, and iron rimmed boots with ample room for the feet. It was difficult to settle upon the man of the house, for he wore fluffy knee-breeches and other paraphernalia to match, and when ensconced in the bosom of his flock, might easily have been taken for the wife and mother, for aught proclaimed by the external trappings of each. They disdained to be upset by curious looks, returning

glance for glance, guilelessly unconscious of self. They hopped, they danced, they laughed, they clashed, making merry till the very hills sang with sympathetic murmurs. They made merry over the food, partaking with much zest, while it, in turn, sprang blooming on brow and cheek, fetched hither by willing carriers of blood and breath, each joy-charged with bracing mountain essence.

I could have resigned myself indefinitely to these happy surroundings, but the call of the wild was upon me, Galdhøpiggen beckoned in the distance, and on I must go.

Though it rained and stormed in the morning, the nap of yesterday and a good night's sleep had rejuvenated the body and brought the spirits up, enabling me to laugh in the face of the elements as we fared forth. I had not the regulation tourist trappings consisting of heavy boots, thick clothing, rainproof coat and a bag of extra rainment on the back, but merely an every day outfit, i. e. calf skin shoes and rubbers, light under-clothing covered by a cheviot suit and ulster, these being in turn set off by a stand up collar, stiff hat, and a faded looking umbrella to top off with. Had I known, for a certainty, when I deposited my baggage at Fagerlund hotel that I was destined to lead myself into devious ways among sleeping hills beyond the clouds, with no date set for the returning, I would, no doubt, have stocked up for the siege like the others did. Again, if we could see ourselves as others do, it would often make plain things, that we are left to ponder over, without always reaching to a full understanding thereof. Thus, when my guide and I said our good-byes, he toggled up to the limit to cope with the coming fray, I dressed as for a church sociable, then was when I saw irrepressible mirth lurking in the corners

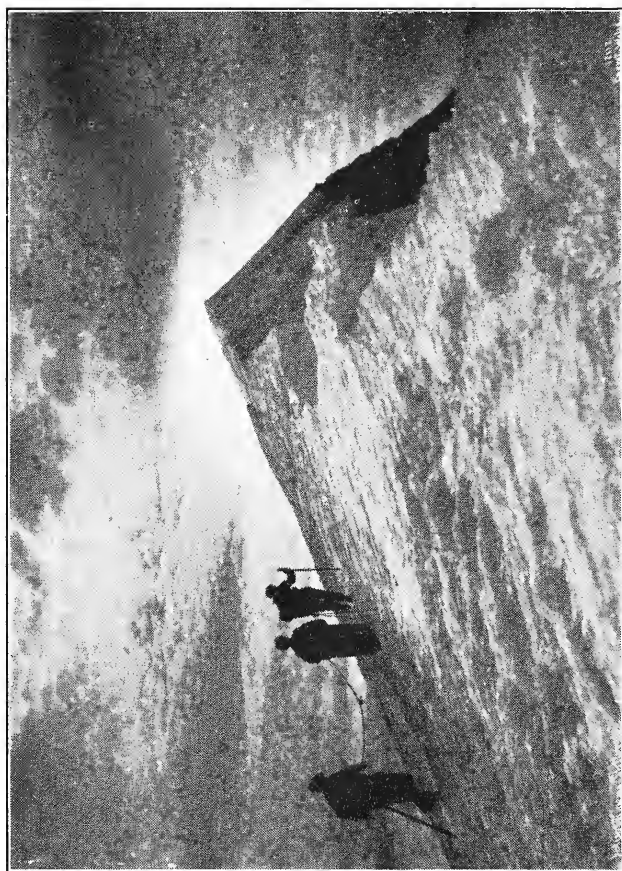
of many eyes, upborne, seemingly, as if by some undercurrent of common sentiment. People are not prone to be over-jolly the first thing in the morning, and I could not account for the pent up merriment hovering always near when I made my final rounds; but, realization came later.

The mirth provoking umbrella proved to be a stay of solace and much worth, for it held at bay the pelting drops of rain casting angrily about, set warring by the blustering wind flouncing about between the peaks. A slight mist circled continually round my neck, but this was far to be preferred rather than have to submit to the leaking ears, weeping eyes and overflowing mouth, sousing the neck band of my umbrellaless guide. The saucy, pestering drops ate through his rain proof coat, bringing coolingly up against his skin, as they sped eagerly downwards to snuggle into his shoes. But he minded them not, for his blood was good, the ample heat of his body hurling them back and aloft in the form of a pillar of steam, which steadily held to his wake. He walked ahead and I behind, and wherever he put his foot, it was replaced by one of mine, and I was thus enabled to drone along carelessly, he blazing the way.

Peering forth under the rim of my umbrella, I took note of the surroundings as best I might, missiles of the air and skulking fog banks, notwithstanding. Some intrepid hill-hunting flowers, blooming prodigiously, had met under a protecting ledge, and from their cozy nestling place, swayed gaily back and forth, cheering the passing plodders on their way. Ryper (Ptarmigan) hurtled by, cleaving the air with a whiz and hum, leaving us at an apparent standstill. Startled hares formed sudden streaks in the mist, picking their bewildering course with unfaltering, unerring instinct. Sly Reynard peeped



Vang, Valders.



Glittertind, Jotunheimen.

ferth, half wishing to pursue, yet mindful of the comfort of a dry, well-kept den. The weather not suiting him at all, the bear stayed at home, licking his chops, and preparing an appetite for the feast to come. Leman (Lemming) that had ventured away from their homes in the moss-banks under the snow, lay strewn about, dying and dead, thus reaping the fruit of their venturesome quest in a forbidden world. The guide spoke of Gjerv (Glutton), but look as we might, none of these scavengers would oblige us with a view. The reindeer stayed out in the rain, feeding busily on moss, darting hither and thither, fleet as the dawn, cooling off on seemingly inaccessible snow beds by day, and nestling, who knows where, at night. The song birds were hushed, for we had left all trees behind, only a twittering, here and there, reminded us of a few of their cousins, who had come to keep us company. The quacking of ducks pierced the gloom from above, and their eager, lurching bodies sped past as if hastening away from a charge.

The path seemed nowhere, yet the guide pressed unhesitatingly, unfalteringly on, seemingly never at a loss, never in uncertainty, where next to proceed. We labored up endless inclines, only to find duplicates in plenty, further on. We crossed miles of rough, jagged stones, appearing as if carelessly quarried; obstacles belched forth from the cavernous depths to provide extra inconvenience for the curious. A misstep atwixt their broken backs and gaping teeth, meant flurried shins, sprains, and sometimes broken bones. The eyes were required to be in constant attendance on the feet. Treacherous loose stones, balancing evilly, till perturbed by the tap of a passing foot, were feared the most, for, suddenly, one would play false, the poor feet being obliged, without notice, to grapple for another footing, and if unsuccessful, take a tumble.

My rubbers hugged the stones firmly, enabling me to pass the day without sustaining a single fall. They were to be preferred in hopping thus from stone to stone, but arrived at the snow beds, my guide with his elephant boots, claimed superiority. The rubbers would persist in sinking in too deep, allowing the thawing snow to plaster the ankles, even threatening the calves. At times they would forsake the foot, being held fast in the snowy embrace, leaving the shoe, naked and bare, to grope dizzily around for cover. When travelling along over the snow-beds, enjoying too, for aught of their yeastiness, a question came to me, which I at once put to my guide, and in this form: "Do you suspect any treacherous places lying in wait for us?" "None at all, in these smaller drifts," came the reassuring response, than which no sooner having been said, he disappeared. It happened as we neared the edge of a drift, and as he scrambled out he hastened to explain that these shallow, scallopy edges, would sometimes take the opportunity to trim up by letting down a passing tourist, now and then, furnishing him a scare and them a new face.

We crossed no large glaciers that day, but we waded over innumerable brooklets formed in their bowels, and which were rushed along with added might and swiftness on account of the protracted rains. We managed to hop across on the various stones so liberally strewn about, but the water had a trick of entering shoes and stockings in spite of all precautions, finding no permanent check till it reached the bare skin. There was a consequent swish and swirl of furiously rushed and overworked water, as it was squirted between the toes and pressed mercilessly to the walls and roof of the shoe, to give play to the unceasing activity of the imprisoned foot. The feet became clean from the too intimate contact, the hue

of the weary water bearing witness to the fact, but the much washed members looked fearfully shrunk and faded.

When teetering along over narrow ledges, gazing down stupendous heights, I took to pondering the sublimity of various things, of which, it occurred to me, that the art of keeping the balance, is by no means the least wonderful. What is this happy thing about us that tells the muscles to contract and relax, enabling the body to remain obedient to the law of equilibrium, while sight, thought and reason, may be occupied about a distant mountain peak? Never before had I so fully appreciated this hidden sense, as on this day of impossible places, in the heart of the Jotunheim.

A queer thing occurring, told me, however, that this independent quantity, may sometimes be startled out of its course, influenced mainly by the faulty working of some major sense, such as, for instance, an error of sight. In the thick midday gloom the fog banks seemingly drew to a standstill, exchanging their motion with mighty boulders and the like, which, upon becoming animate, deceived the eye, causing a corresponding quiver in the balance.

We saw figures of giants almost if not quite, on the move, and near the top of one mighty Jokul there appeared, silhouetted midst rock and snow, the exact likeness of a princely, black steed, rearing imperiously on its haunches, as if about to bridge the yawning declivity in front, in one mighty, surpassing leap. Uncouth rock formations glowered menacingly from above, as we shyly slipped beneath, eagerly hurrying our steps as if in apology for our unwilling trespass. We had come unbidden, happening on Nature's wash day, hence, such a scowling face and sulky reception. But like unto the atmosphere in

the kitchen, when the cleansing turmoil ceases, it brightens, so did the sun enter cheeringly forth, as the well rinsed clouds, all strung out, willingly lent room, that its rays might play in their places and brighten our way. The rocks now remained quiescent and the fog, panic stricken, lifted, and bundled frantically away in vast vapory masses, seeking egress in the first available cleft, or pass, in the mountains. The numerous particles of light were profusely strewn about, kissing dry the face of the weeping rock, sparkling mischievously in the tears of the ragged heather, and peeping audaciously into sad, secret caverns, where none other might enter. It did appear before our presence objects quite overlooked in the gloom, all happily arrayed, the glimmer and glitter of which, thrown back, penetrated even to the hungry soul sitting awake in our eyes. It discovered to us a beautiful little flower, the staunchest of them all, clinging to the moss at the very foot of a glacier. It never would have obtruded itself on our vision, had we not caught it unawares, leaning its head over the bosom of the snow. It had journeyed hither at the behest of its Maker, to make company for its white robed sister doomed to utter quietude and perpetual banishment from all other faces of bloom, with the accompanying twitter of life and joyousness.

Dropping into a little valley where the sun of many yesterdays had cajoled forth some silent leaves and pensive tufts of grass, we were astonished to meet with a herd of young cattle, treading briskly about, feeding busily on these unassuming growths. We approached warily, for fear of stampeding them, exercising such caution, also, in consideration of the possibility of their charging us. We might have spared ourselves these stealthy, cunning moves, for they were not a bit surprised, and plodded on with their feeding only the

more energetically, as we drew into range. Arrived in their midst, it happened that we were the ones who moved out of the way, not they. They had evidently had a touch of the newest civilization, observing to the letter the axiom: "First come, first served," in other words—Grab! One steer had evidently sustained a very serious fall, for his hide was badly torn up and lacerated. The succulent grass had tempted him to stretch too far and he, not being supplied with goat's legs, had slipped. But he seemed none the worse for his unlucky plunge, moving about as nimbly as the others, seeking aggressively for what he liked best. He honored us with a look, but it quickly sped past us, as if he had suddenly dropped off into another train of thought. If we had been a hare or a mouse he could have done no less. They were all small, having been so brought up, being but the offshoots of those tender, esthetical looking, flower eating, sæter cows. They had been left by a cattle speculator in the free pasturage here afforded, to prepare themselves suitably into shape for the block awaiting them at the end of the season, in hungry towns below.

We carried lunches in our pockets, but were so fastidious in our selection of a halting place, that we walked by all the most favored nooks, finally settling wrathfully, in the least inviting spot of all. To aggravate the situation, the clouds became as one again, and from the union issued drops, which soaked our bread, while passing from hand to mouth. The very air was water-logged, threatening to drown us. We sat in damp, dank, misery for awhile, till the tasteless morsels had been safely bestowed and settled, when we stretched our clammy limbs, laboriously rose, and unenthusiastically set forth again. The guide made several ineffectual attempts to light his pipe, but failed utterly and ignominiously. It

would have served as an approach to cheer, but even this little comfort must needs be denied us. To sing was an impossibility, the common discordance being too utterly obvious and disturbing. To talk was unpleasant on account of the lips being required to remain shut in such weather. Though we did not grumble, had we met the Philosopher of Cheerfulness just then it would not have gone well with him. We sought safety in silence and ceaseless motion; pessimism is tabooed in the mountains. We walked on in the manner once previously described, continuing our seesaw motion so steadily, that at last it partook of a half hypnotic influence, portending endlessness. And there seemed never to have been anything else. But there was soon to be. My guide announced quietly, that we had now entered upon the downward incline which, in an hour or so, would terminate not far from the threshold of Spiterstulen. Upon hearing this, new life awoke within me, and question upon question was born and propounded, pushing past each other and engaging the wits quite furiously of him, who was to receive and answer them. He was required to name all the snow peaks we passed; the brooks and rivers we saw; the mosses and ferns we espied, and a great deal more such which, I have for convenience sake, forgotten. We soon came into a valley where a stream had subsided into silence and was taking a nap, which, but a few minutes before, had leaped in frenzied madness down the mountain side. Some frothy little bubbles remained to show of its busy day spent, miles and miles, along its rugged course. But its rest was of short duration. We soon came to a place where a swift, smooth, undercurrent, was pulling it down another incline without as much as a warning ripple on its surface, only to precipitate it, headlong, into a fearful cauldron below, where greenish

heads of fearsome looking boulders bobbed up and down, as the helpless waters crashed down upon them. It sought frantic exit in every direction, only to be thrown back again by solid walls of rock, finally slipping out, sucked forth by the sweeping current leading a way of escape out of the grewsome kettle. And so it was rushed from place to place, causing a mighty uproar for the benefit of the wayfarers wending their way by its banks, and making them dumb and speechless by its incessant, deafening plaint. We crossed an angry torrent just escaped from the interior of a mighty drift, its ruffled bosom showing white from its fierce grovelling in the womb of the clay-splashed, grinding, crunching, slowly shifting glacier. Such light-colored, limy, clayey matter, mingled with the water, causes the greenish tint seen in mountain lakes or adjacent fjords.

A few minutes more of stiff walking brought us to our haven of rest, the long looked for Spiterstulen sæter hut. We dared enter without knocking, no one resenting the intrusion. We were met by the sæter owner himself, who congratulated us on our rapid journey, he calculating that we had made the trip two hours quicker than was ordinarily done. Hearing this, the guide and I looked upon each other with much approval. There was admiration also in the eyes of the dairy maid, but not for me, the guide being the younger and more fit. They both beamed on me, however, when my crowns came in evidence, for six of them were due him for his companionship and she, bright thing, knew very well that I wouldn't have the heart to lock them all up in my purse again. She stuffed the guide into her tiny kitchen, where sat a couple of other men smoking. Me, she led into a large room where there was a "peis" and a large table together with several doors opening into adjacent bed-

rooms. I was left at large here to dry out and compose myself as best I might. Upon entering, my eyes being more familiar with the brighter light out of doors, could not readily adjust themselves to the gloom, smaller objects remaining, for a certain space of time, undefined. I had been vaguely aware of a formless heap before the "peis" during the first few moments, but the several impressions received immediately upon my entering, had not allowed the centering of thought or attention upon any one thing in particular. While the mind was groping about in the throes of dawning realization, it was startled into full focus on the aforesaid heap, which, with many quirks and contortions, was now rapidly changing outline. Nor did it settle back into its former folds, on the contrary, it lifted up one end, which rose higher and higher and finally resolved itself, fully straightened out and adjusted, into a very correct, tall, angular Englishman. The remainder of the heap also partook of form and much motion, becoming when disentangled, equivalent to three larking maidens, viking girls in quest of mountain joy, all hailing from the capital. Their simultaneous rising was intended as a salute to the newcomer and I no doubt took it as such, having by now forgotten, remembering, on the other hand, very distinctly, that the apparition caused me to make a sudden dive into the nearest bedroom. I felt unequal to the demands of the occasion considering my very much bedraggled state. Arrived in my solitary nook I quitted the faithful umbrella, hat, ulster, shoes and stockings and washed my face and hands, this being, however, quite unnecessary, which, also, requires no explanation. But the towel worked wonders, as did the brush and having meanwhile, begged a pair of dry stockings and slippers from the friendly host, I was enabled to emerge tranquil,

combed and restored, before the good company. They had by now settled on benches before the blaze, chattering incessantly, throwing pine-knots on the flames to enjoy the sparks and to dissipate the rain, which fell in a respectable shower through the wide, yawning chimney. There was a general scramble for the privilege of surrendering up to me their respective places, but the pleasure of acceptance was spoiled, for I could fill only one. I became ensconced in the very midst of the gathering, and with kindness breathed about from right to left, with also a fire in front to soothe and dry the several tortured limbs and legs, our feelings bore us aloft into realms of ineffable bliss.

While I had been occupied in brushing up, the number of guests was augmented by the arrival of three bright faced students, who had also been adopted as members in the cheerful circle about the peis. Soon there were more arrivals; this time it was a couple of ladies, who were promptly ushered into the ring by the indefatigable host, they being made instantly welcome, all vying with each other in being gracious and kind. They were Danish school-ma'ams out for a holiday. They were quite filled to the brim with enthusiasm, having hunted their own way in the wilds, and telling of it with a perfect salvo of words and gestures and so good-naturedly, that they quite overflowed with it. The conversation which had hitherto been carried on chiefly in Norwegian, was now richly spiced with Danish. These two languages intermingled nicely, the one being but a supplement to the other. But when the solitary Englishman took to looking yearningly from one to the other, as if sighing for a better understanding, we took pity on him, and adopted his tongue as a common vehicle of expression. All could converse freely in his language and

thus, he remaining true to his colors and traditions, was spared the pain of acquiring any other. Almost in the wake of the Danes appeared an elderly maiden with a youth in her train, captured on the march, and now made to act as her escort, both being headed in the same direction. There was no question of surrendering up a place, for she immediately took one, allowing meanwhile, her charge to shift for himself. She had taught school all her life, bringing her school room atmosphere with her, cackling and bustling about, as if all the world were her scholars to be benefited by her learning, precept and example. Given finally a grain of time, the unassertive man of Leeds ventured to tell us that he had been joined together with his three lady companions, while attempting to cross the Memuru glacier all alone, that day. He had been roped in by them, they having been touched by his loneliness, ordering their guide to tie the knot securely that they might serve him in a union of safety while crossing the treacherous places. They had let him loose when the danger was over, but grown used to their company, he had remained a willing captive in their ranks, till now.

I had been making silent query, for some little time, as to the characters I had fallen in with and directly, as if in answer to it, a turn in the conversation enlightened me that I was brushing elbows with the son of a former chief justice who was, besides, a near relative of Ole Bull, and yes, even also of Edvard Grieg. A voice issuing in sonorous accents from under a table in the corner of the room betrayed, through various shadings and intonations, the origin of its author, the sure-enough son of his father, a famous manager-actor, member of the French academy etc., etc., and not to forget the mother, known throughout the kingdom for her famous roles and

impersonations. From out his gloomy retreat this bright-witted blossom of stock histrionic, made sudden excursions on all fours across the floor to pick up handkerchiefs, rings and such like, dropped by the ladies, offering them up, in homely obeisance and an abjectly apologetical, sprawling attitude. His splendid antics drew the heartiest merriment and all the more, perhaps, because of his name and student's cap. There were those who sought to discover the identity of the three graces who had the gentleman from England in tow, but it was not to be revealed to us. Being that there had already been discovered a few such highborn persons, conjecture went into ecstasy, soon pointing to these noble dames as being nothing less than persons of royalty, and that's what they were, of course, princesses all, without any doubt. This being understood and settled, still enquiry circled about the representative of John Bull, opinion soon forming a suspicion that he must be a prince in disguise; nothing lower in rank would suffice. He was unhumorous enough to let it slip that he was but an officer in the bank of England and we, by now, being used to stepping among ultra-aristocrats, looked upon him somewhat condescendingly. Though he did not carry royal blood in his veins it turned out that he proved popular as any; even the Hawkeye hayseed was made to feel that, rank or no rank, a "man's a man for a' that." We were just a crowd of grown up children, accidentally thrown together, and careless of station, wild for wholesome play. And play we did.

Supper came first, and such a jolly repast was seldom before indulged in. Actual eating, mastication and tasting the food, was deliciously prolonged, laughter and repartee giving zest to its action and that of the grateful stomach, also concerned. We had tea and eggs, bread

and cheese, sardines and marmalade and if there was more, I do not remember, only, that when rising from the table were we aware the condition of the food had been such, that from no sensations of the body could we tell what had stilled our hunger. Through with the joyous food indulgence the pleasure making was continued in various ways, the agreeable, gray bearded sæter owner participating, till far into the evening, when weary limbs complained and languid spirits palled upon our play.

We slept upon extremely hard beds with bearskins, sheepskins and goatskins to bear down upon us for warmth and company. Such great husks of former life seem different at night from mere spreads of cotton or other flimsy stuff; they cannot be disassociated from their one-time occupant, nor are they void of a seeming comradeship.

The transition from waking to sleep was frictionless, for all joined in the night-chorus quickly and silently; there was no useless sighing or restless turning. The body having been thoroughly subdued, it needed no further quickening except that of utter immobility, and the relaxation consequent upon entire forgetfulness. Though the majority of us can measure time in our sleep, being able, generally, to awaken at any hour we highly desire, Nature in this instance, having felt herself not a little outraged, took revenge by letting us oversleep the next morning. We had intended to be quite early, but no single one had been able to shake off the lethargic mountain coma which had assailed us so valiantly the night before and be rid of its embrace, till the late hour of seven.

We breakfasted more quietly than we had supped, sundry aches and pains with the usual disinclination for animated discourse, hindering attempts at hilarity. Sev-

eral spoons were thrown at one who so forgot himself as to mar the serene morning calm by trying to be funny. But our appetites had not forsaken us, and after our visit to the table, little remained to build another course upon. We had come like an invading army, feasting to our heart's content. Imagine our surprise, and actual dismay, when learning that the modest host had scarce taxed us more than cost. He had been most happy to serve us, he said. If anyone had acted patronizingly in such a house, it could not but be most heartily unwished, when the parting came. True, we could, no doubt, have prevailed upon the good man to have accepted a more than generous tip, but human nature being generally so constituted as to be equally loth to part with unexpected gains, as with the regular ones, we happened mostly to forget it. We could, besides, have smoothed out matters very prettily by hiring one of his guides standing in eager readiness to show us the way, but, alas, our sense of obligation was not quite acute enough to guide the hand purse-ward. It would also have been greatly to our advantage to have engaged our man, and which, the course of the story soon will show.

The jolly, fearless students took it upon themselves to act as guides and all the rest joined in, equally brave, looking upon possible perils with bland indifference. The man of Uncle Sam and his British cousin deemed it but a privilege to come, taking it for granted that they could safely follow where the Norwegians dared lead. We held to the wake conversing interestedly, the female contingent (the princesses) having mingled in promiscuously, here and there, faithfully supporting their section of the indomitable single file regarding with such heroic calm the untried, unfathomed future.

Gathering up our end, England and America strode

valiantly on in the rear, keeping an eye, meanwhile, on bold Norway navigating in front, represented by the man of mirth who had delegated himself to the fore and who now with many erratic dodges, twists and turns, was seemingly holding himself and us securely to the true path. Whether he grew weary of the strain and responsibility of leadership I know not, but directly, upon his halting in a contemplative way, he was superseded in command by one of the other students. For awhile all went swimmingly, though, for the life of me, I could not discern the least sign of a path where he so confidently led the way. On and on he went, and having taken the bit in his teeth there was no stop nor stay, and follow we must, an undulating human chain being dragged rather unwillingly along over a terrifically rugged course, and one we had long since come to question. Again there was bewilderment and much wavering and finally, the third student pushed into the lead. But this was merely an experiment and soon came to an end; there ensued a general consultation where it turned out that all were equally wise concerning the situation, the ladies included. With the cliffs towering threateningly above us, and with yawning deeps below, we felt that we had been fetched into a pretty pass indeed. But all took equal blame, no one said, "I told you so," or alluded to the guide left behind.

Our next move proved to be as ill-advised as the first. Each following the bent of his own inexperienced wits, we were soon scattered like sheep in the wilds, groping vaguely about, among the horrors of stone and chasm, feeling for a path, or at least, a sense of direction pointing to our destination. The princesses were as intrepid as the rest and quite undismayed, they having risen to the occasion. Once when crawling out of a most unin-

viting hole, scared and thirsty, I came upon one of them sitting cool as you please resting on a favored stone near a mountain brooklet, dipping her little tin goblet into the amber liquid, and refreshing herself as contentedly as if she were sitting safe in her own bower at home. Seeing furrows of concern puckering my brow, she spoke lightly of our predicament and offering me a drink, caused a dissipation of my gloom and the ugly lineaments settling about the features.

Though for the most part completely lost to each other, we happened by a seeming miracle of direction to have proceeded along in a certain unity, for on reaching a somewhat level place all were surprised on counting noses to discover that none were missing. There was more united effort after this, and while individual effort lapsed, a common vigilance prevailed, allowing us to drop into a visiting mood as it were. We tested quite thoroughly the companionship of each, shifting from one to the other accordingly as we happened to hurry or lag, and sometimes also in our choice of individual stepping stones causing separation, or in the taking of diverging paths, meanwhile, moving amiably on, patching up broken sentences as best we might, or never finishing the subject at all. Such accidental tete a tetes were very enjoyable; especially do I remember of falling into line, through an awkward slip, with the mild-mannered cousin of Grieg, who entertained me with delightful anecdotes gleaned from much personal association with this gentle genius. I was so enwrapped that I could have continued the discourse indefinitely, forgetful of the surroundings, but a mis-step sent my companion sprawling, and the subject was promptly shelved for the day. He arose with a bleeding finger and no little surprise, but the hurt was slight, being quickly hidden with a bandage and forgotten

with a laugh.

Our wanderings had led us to the edge of a crazily sloping glacier showing of some faded tracks not yet fully obliterated, and where we blissfully entrusted our steps only to be treated to a sudden, simultaneous sitting down. Personally I had not been quite removed from off the soles of my feet and the worse for me, for I took to sailing on them down that terrible slope with the awful abyss (?) at its foot, in elegant, yet sickening style. With my dignity to preserve and also a borrowed camera clutched in my left hand, I manipulated the life-saving umbrella in my right to such effect that it broke from a stab I made into a cleft in the ice, but which, luckily, arrested my unwilling course, promising safety for a second or two. I felt all of the warmth in the body rushing to the head and every hair straining to remove my hat, but there was no encouragement in this, the mind remaining a blank and the eyes wide open in wit-less apprehension. While hovering in this terrible balance thus, the other lunatics crawling about almost as helplessly above, they, noticing finally my horrible dilemma, cried out in heart-rending chorus: "Remove your rubbers!" And which advice I very meekly followed. With the aid of my partly wrecked umbrella and rid of the treacherous rubbers, clinging yet to the camera, I managed to work my way back to the others, where I was supplied with a stick nobly tendered by one of the party who, in place of the surrendered implement, took my umbrella, he being the better shod.

The Englishman was holding on for dear life to his favorite princess, whom he had saved from despair by raising to her feet and holding her upright by a firm grasp of the hand, meantime steadying himself securely by leaning heavily on his iron-tipped staff. On passing

me, his lady in charge gripped my hand heartily and helpfully, offering to hold on, but this only upset my equilibrium acquired with so much labor, and I was obliged, much against my will, to yell out that she was marring my balance and to let go immediately, lest I fall.

The crossing proved not so serious as we had feared, for all we had to do when we felt ourselves going was to drop into a sitting posture and the added surface thus presented by our bodies to the glacier, hindered our sliding. We edged warily inch by inch, over the dreary, furrowed zone, but despite our caution, there were many ludicrous antics unwillingly performed, and many remarkable poses displayed. We enjoyed nearly a mile of this distracting, torturing pilgrimage, and when finally across looked around in spent dismay like fear-stricken horses craning back their necks to regard with wide-eyed concern a danger barely escaped.

Once safely across we did not tarry, nor did the outlook bring cheer, but scenting a path we followed it doggedly and spying a cairn, we knew at last, that we had won. With more of these rude signs on the way we could have been spared much difficulty in making our advance. Lives have been lost in the wilds for the lack of these easily erected, silent but trustworthy, guides.

With an eye on the cairn already located, we searched till there appeared another, and then another, and so continuing, we stuck unerringly to the course to which they pointed, finding ourselves finally arrived, rightly and correctly, under Galdhøpiggen's very nose. The Juvas hut was built on the level lying here, two hours removed from the very crown of Norway's highest mountain to provide entertainment for tourists, weary stragglers such as we.

The daughter of the famous mountain guide, Knut Vole, the proprietor, received us at the door and bid us welcome, assigning each their respective rooms and sleeping places. We bunked in close proximity to each other, for the room was sorely limited and all the guests must needs be housed. The ladies were hidden aloft, and whether they had the greater comfort and convenience, it behooves us not to know. They were conducted to their separate sleeping alcoves by means of a rude stairway raised aloft outside and communicating by a common outer door to the nests within. Having fixed up a bit—those hailing from above appeared as transfigured—all met below in the vast common room serving as guest and living room, dining and smoking room. Being that we came too late for dinner and too early for supper, both were combined in a generous conglomerative meal, no one knowing the which from which.

Feeling safe and somewhat rested, secure in our places before a festal board, we felt that we could afford to assume indifference and prate of our foolish achievement before the assembled guests. The face of one took on seriousness, and no awarding smile beamed forth to illuminate the finish of our ill-timed tale. Knut Vole had lived too long, and tried too much to look lightly on such an escapade. He warned us never again to repeat it, for some such another reckless excursion might prove to be our last. Others had furnished example. Being not unwilling to change the subject, and our appetites remaining unaffected by our stunts, the wholesome viands were quickly pounced upon, offering also, pretext for favorable remark, which last went home, and Knut took us to his heart again.

Old Knut took every one to his bosom, and without partiality, making one and all feel that they had indeed

found a haven of refuge in this eerie spot, this furthest removed place of abode in the land where the handiwork of man had prevailed.

Though we were in the midst of summer, the sighing night wind blew cold without, penetrating even slightly through unseen crevices between the stout logs of the crudely built dwelling. There was a stove, but the fire flickered rather low, wood not being any too plentiful and only with great difficulty transported into these far removed altitudes, as had been also the material for the hut. Nothing on wheels might venture hereabouts, all the provisions and camp paraphernalia needed being borne hither on horse back, or shouldered by guides or others. No horses or cows were kept, and save in the one lone human habitation, life in any form remained foreign, utter silence, broken now and then by warring winds or the reverberating boom of cracking glaciers, holding everlasting sway.

Near the hut is situated an ice and snow-plashed lake where the summer warmth sometimes induces the water to peep out, only to set it in mad motion and awful upheaval, by plunging a billion pound ice-cake into its bosom shuffled off a slowly moving glacier.

While night and darkness were being gloomily wedded without, a well burnished lamp shedded a cheery luster within our four-cornered cage, inviting us to be merry, and stove or no stove, work up warmth. We took to imitating the voices of birds and the speech of various animals. A professor from Holland roared like a lion, frightening the owls, cats, dogs and monkeys into fearful silence. The American eagle quit screaming and fluttered silently into a corner, while the Norwegian bear, shamed in his whining, drew tremblingly into a sitting posture behind the stove. John Bull's frenzied bellowing died

into a moan as he sought refuge behind his princess, who sat like an awe-stricken bird of paradise guarding its young. The roaring ended in long drawn guttural growls, upon which, gay shouts of laughter and loud acclaim burst forth, impinging the very walls and rafters, quite threatening the roof. The Hollander, no longer a lion, sat wreathed in smiles. A German doctor nearly committed murder on a musical classic loved by us all, perpetrating it by means of a starchy violin, which he had fished forth from a nook in the wall. Two ladies resuscitated the theme in song, silencing the horrid fiddle, thus saving the day. By unanimous consent and combined effort, the Britisher was dragged forth from his fond retreat to lead in the song known as, "The three blind mice." The sixteen travellers present joined in as if their lungs were at stake. The conductor bawled forth as with a voice of ten, setting fair example, and wielded his baton (poker) in an agony of contortion, with danger to all. If the sleeping hills remained yet unmoved, the fault was not ours, for to disturb them we had indeed done our very best. Songs of all nations were sung in hearty, vociferous chorus, and with rancours forgotten, we formed a miniature peace congress, holding amiable session.

We retired to rest in high exaltation, with spirits imbued with love and forbearance, letting differences go hang for a day. My window revealed the shadowy spectre of the mighty summit in a death-like shroud, which reached out as I dozed away, hovering over me as a nightmare through the hours of miserable, troubled sleep. I arose unrefreshed to prepare for our great climb, but as the sun remained hidden, the fog budging not the slightest, we were pleased to postpone our journey till another day. We shook off our disappointment, made

merry again and in the joy of living, I forgot the listlessness and soul weariness inspired by my ugly dream phantasy and unsound sleep. We sang and played the livelong day, only, I must not forget to make record of our great slide, with our own Knut acting as master of ceremonies.

To pass time and provide amusement during such awkward waits he had caused several sleds to be transported from below, which he now brought forward for the use of those pleasurably inclined. We followed at his heels, en-masse, for all wished to share in this excellent sport. Seeking out one of the smoothest drifts and treading upwards along its immaculate bosom for the best part of a mile, Knut bid me sit astride his "Boomerang," and under his experienced guidance, I was given my first meteor-like glide in the fields of perpetual snow. Later I was invited to be one of several on a sled steered by a less experienced man, with the result that we cap-sized, and skirts and coat tails, boots and shoes, hands and feet were indiscriminately mingled. Some bumped noses, some rolled over and over, while others slid rocket-like, alarmingly far, playing sad havoc with their toilettes and outlying limbs. But as long as no one was hurt no one cared, and though many a one looked very much rumped up, all decided that it had been glorious fun, and forthwith voted Knut their best and sweetest thanks.

The fun-makers' convention took up its deliberations immediately after supper, but despite peace congresses and other weighty sittings, it broke up earlier than yesterday, for there was that in the air denoting hunger for change. The next night was short and dreamless and all were up, figuratively speaking, with the lark, to watch for sunbeams and an unclouded sky. Though it might

have looked more promising the prospect was not discouraging, and Knut finally decided that we might attempt the great climb.

All were told to make solemn preparations looking to the feet. My rubbers were frowned out of question entirely, and being that I had no other shoes than the ones of calf, they were suffered to remain, and I quickly made ready, slinking into the rear of the critical line. I yearned for my umbrella but dared not take it for fear of being sneered out of court by these judges of costume. But my ulster I would have, even though kind-hearted Knut looked me over with a half scornful, pitying glint in his eyes. With the camera in one hand and a rude stick in the other, I shuffled along with the rest, carrying the burden of my own self as lightly and cheerfully as they, though admittedly, not quite up to their standard in the matter of clothes. Although each had felt called upon to make remark touching the correctness of my outfit, I suffered it with easy patience, having detected much real kindness lurking up their sleeves. Some were actually concerned for my welfare. Others frankly confessed they thought me courageous for disdaining to turn back because of a trifle, in view of the great things at stake.

Arrived at the treacherous drifts about the summit Knut looped us in with a rope, each separately, to hinder individual gliding or sliding, or possible disappearances through bottomless clefts. We were told to walk singly, at a certain distance from each other, to prevent too much strain on any portion of the line, in case of a drop. But he was not minded in this, in the least, the rope dropping slack, coming taut only when Knut scowled anxiously backwards over the truant row. Each one felt immune from a fall for nothing seemed to be happen-

ing, human nature asserting itself careless as ever, questioning caution, when all went so well. But when somebody's foot found no bottom and the body came tumbling after, there was a scramble for places and henceforth Knut's advice was better heeded.

Without warning our guide woke the echoes with an ear piercing cry. We hung stock still in our tracks listening in awed wonder at the commotion of sound thus set raging between the peaks. When Knut shouted "Denmark," with all the power of his lungs it was quickly repeated quite correctly the same, coming back more tardily after awhile and in meeker accents, finally returning almost inaudible, as if having gone into the far south for permission to say it again. When all shouted together the pandemonium let loose was so great, that I feared for the stability of Björnstjerne Björnson's features, especially the nose, which Nature had pictured in a frowning rock formation on our left. It was here that experiments with the Keely motor should have been made, for such mighty echoes as these, could not but sustain motion in freak-works with wings or without, and for the longest possible time.

Our path remained not always on comfortable beds of snow, but led us also over stone piles and slippery ice-crusts, and finally up a towering ridge with a thin shoulder, reminding of a razor-backed hog. We had to cut notches into its very spine to gain foothold, and as ice had formed here, danger lurked at every step. The wind blew fiercely, threatening to lift us off our feet, and though the ulster hindered it entering its cloth, it did not lessen its impact, and I threatened to sail off into space with a generous following in train. The ice-hewn steps stood rather far apart, and in striving to attain them we had to hitch carefully along, respectful of each other's

motions, like Siamese twins. I was in a state of much concern lest by some awkward mischance I should fall, thus possibly precipitating the whole string to headlong destruction. We pushed rocks, unfeelingly, into chasms below, purporting to gauge the depths, listening, meanwhile, eagerly to the cruel sounds proclaiming them shattered to the core. For fear of taking similar plunges ourselves we grew to be extra cautious, nor did we further disturb the peace of the silent stones, so little given to inquisitiveness or busy peregrinations.

Having ascended the furrowed neck of the razor-back we soon found ourselves entering upon the upturned snout constituting the top, and forthwith was let loose a most unmusical volley of sounds, intended as cheers. We quickly shed our harness and each made haste to be the first to plant foot on the very pinnacle. Right here Knut had erected a rude shelter of boards, borne thither on his back through a period of strenuous effort lasting for weeks. To our horror we became enveloped in a cloud, and to provide cheer for such a contingency our host had brought up a tiny little stove, where flames were soon sparkling merrily, and the delicious aroma of boiling coffee, came temptingly to tickle our fog-dampened noses. We stuck our cards into the walls and ceiling where there were thousands before, all new-comers wanting to make sure that their names be properly perpetuated, once having trod upon this very highest spot in all northern Europe. Huddled upon low benches set close to the wall, all had appropriated a place, and though we sat exceedingly close, the discomfort was minded by none, weightier matters by far, claiming our attention. Knut was preparing to serve coffee! We waited each for our share with burning impatience, the novelty of the situation having completely upset our poise. All that mat-



Jotunheimen—Udsigt fra Beseggen med Gjend and Besvand.



tered just then, was, that we by no manner of chance allowed ourselves to be overlooked in the distribution of cups. A few minutes before, such indulgence had not entered our thought, but once given the hint, existence seemed dreary without it. We burned our lips and scalded our tongues with the fiery black stuff, but having got what we wanted, no one cried out. Knut sat in our midst, ladling out the precious drops in smoking portions right and left, thus becoming enveloped in a mantle of steam, which set off his figure in happy, cosy outline. Seeing him thus picturesquely ensconced, it occurred to one, brighter than the rest, to beg for a tale of the mountains. This reminded some of what they had long wanted to hear, viz: The Story of His Great Adventure. He would have fled, but being completely circled about, he realized it were but vain to make the attempt. But-tressed up by a pipe and the cheerful little blaze, he beamed benevolently about, and surrounded by such a varied array of listeners and in such a place, there was formed, altogether, a scene not soon to be forgotten. "I was alone with a very green tourist one day in these wilds," he said, "when happened what for a time I thought surely would end all my trips here and elsewhere, forever. We had roped ourselves in, safely enough, but as if fated for trouble I had let caution take wings, forgetting to be watchful of the person, I had in my charge. To walk with a slack rope for two among these tricky crevices so carefully covered, is to court danger with a vengeance; with my attention called elsewhere, I had not noticed that my companion, contrary to instructions, hung hard on my heels, dragging the loop in the snow. Of a sudden the snowy crust gave way beneath me and an awful black abyss opened and swallowed me up. I had nothing to do but fall, which I did, but luckily for me

and the green-horn above, my feet instinctively casting about, struck a ledge about twenty feet down. This arrested my progress, saving me also from pulling the other fellow in after me, who, if he had but kept to his place would have been secure, at the same time providing a stay for me. Being still in the possession of my wits, I clung where I had landed, thankful for this much, at least. But the ledge was so narrow I could scarce keep my balance and imagine my horror when the fiend above took to pulling and jerking, threatening to tear me off my perch. Had he succeeded in this, we would both have been plunged, headlong, into a bottomless pit. Failing in his well meant but foolish effort to dislodge me and spilling his own life as well as mine, he desisted, the rope growing slack, showing of his departure in quest of aid. Being now rid of the greatest danger, I examined as carefully as I could into the present condition of my predicament. As scarcely any light penetrated from above, I was obliged to explore about me with my hands to discover, if possible, some means of escape from my fearful dilemma. I found there was ice in plenty to support my weight could I but gain foothold, but there were no other accommodating ledges, and I soon saw that to escape there was no royal way ready, but that I must make one. At this juncture I remembered the ice-axe strapped to my back and tingled all over with joy at the thought of possible deliverance. I quickly took to chopping steps in the ice, but found it exceedingly slow work and fearfully dangerous, on account of my cramped position and frequent slipping. Because of the shower of fine particles of ice, I was sometimes on the point of losing the grip on my axe-handle, when my heart would almost stop beating in fearful apprehension of results, should I drop it. After several hours of steady chopping, I had ascended

into the light, but when congratulating myself at last on assured safety and speedy relief, occurred the most awful thing of all; a huge cake of solid snow from above, becoming loosened, plunged down upon me. It gripped me in an embrace, as of death, but by a miracle of chance, my head crashed through, but it pinioned my body so close to the icy wall on brushing past, that it knocked all the breath out of it, leaving me swaying in a dizzy, half-stupor, which seemed surely would have precipitated me down to my finish in the horrible hole. But my end had not come, the organs of breathing finally resuming action, the entering air whizzing in with a whine, the brain also taking up its functions, the vision no longer being obscured by millions of stars. How glorious it was again to be able to breathe, and to see, and to appreciate my trusty balance that had saved me from toppling over while the mind was at sea. To tell of my happiness when at last I climbed out, I cannot, words are not for such uses; let each one take thought to himself. Thanks to my good health I quickly recovered the shock, found my way home quite alone, no rescuers showing up, and slept my sleep quietly and undisturbedly, that night as always before."

"The summit is clear," some one sang out, and immediately there belched forth an eager, curious throng, and silence reigned supreme in the hut. The old sun of Noah, brightly smiling as ever, came back to its haunts today as of yore, pushing the clouds playfully apart, lovingly showering its gold on the crown of the venerable mount, which, glistening back, spoke of mutual endearments, ancient of origin, harking back in advance of the flood. We felt ourselves uncomfortably new, quite excruciatingly up to date.

The birth-giving clouds, themselves just born, hurried

to hide in the midst of their own, only to be caught peeping, red-handed, in full glare of the dazzling spectre appearing with such disturbing effect. The incessant play of the vapor, with wonderful magic of its own, vied with the mountains in holding our gaze, at times bewildering the senses, fantastically combing its shape into a likeness of a nearby scene, and mockingly querying, which was which. Though so seemingly solid, if only we could have encompassed it about, we would have caught it up bodily, crushed it in our hands and flung it away, for it was not such, but the mountains, we had come out to see. And it finally ducked away and disappeared, and we saw!

Was the view worth half a crown as an investment? It had cost us more than that. Who can figure out the value of esthetical raptures by mathematical rule? Perhaps our guide could, but to me it appeared that life's highest awards have no intrinsic valuation and that all our material strivings are but a means to an end. We had now arrived, as it were, at a finish. As with music, for example, and the pure and noble in art, here was a glimpse as of heaven, a foretaste of the beyond, and for which, all our preparations, the work of our life, is but the goal. Was it worth while? The rapt features of my companions all joyfully tense as if in earnest worship, as well as the rapturous promptings of my own soul, answered loudly, yes. The view was wide and wonderfully varied, but the scene was of such sublimity that I herewith make promise not to try to describe it, and will say in the language of Knut Vole, "mere words are not for such uses." Let those hungering for soul exaltation seek out such spots for themselves; the messages received here are private, untranslatable, and not deliverable through carriers or interpreters.

As I turned away from the glorious scene, there came

into my thoughts that beautiful psalm of Brorson, made famous by Grieg:

"Behold the mighty white array,
Like snow clad mountains far away."

THE END.





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